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180 PAGE
Bumper Issue

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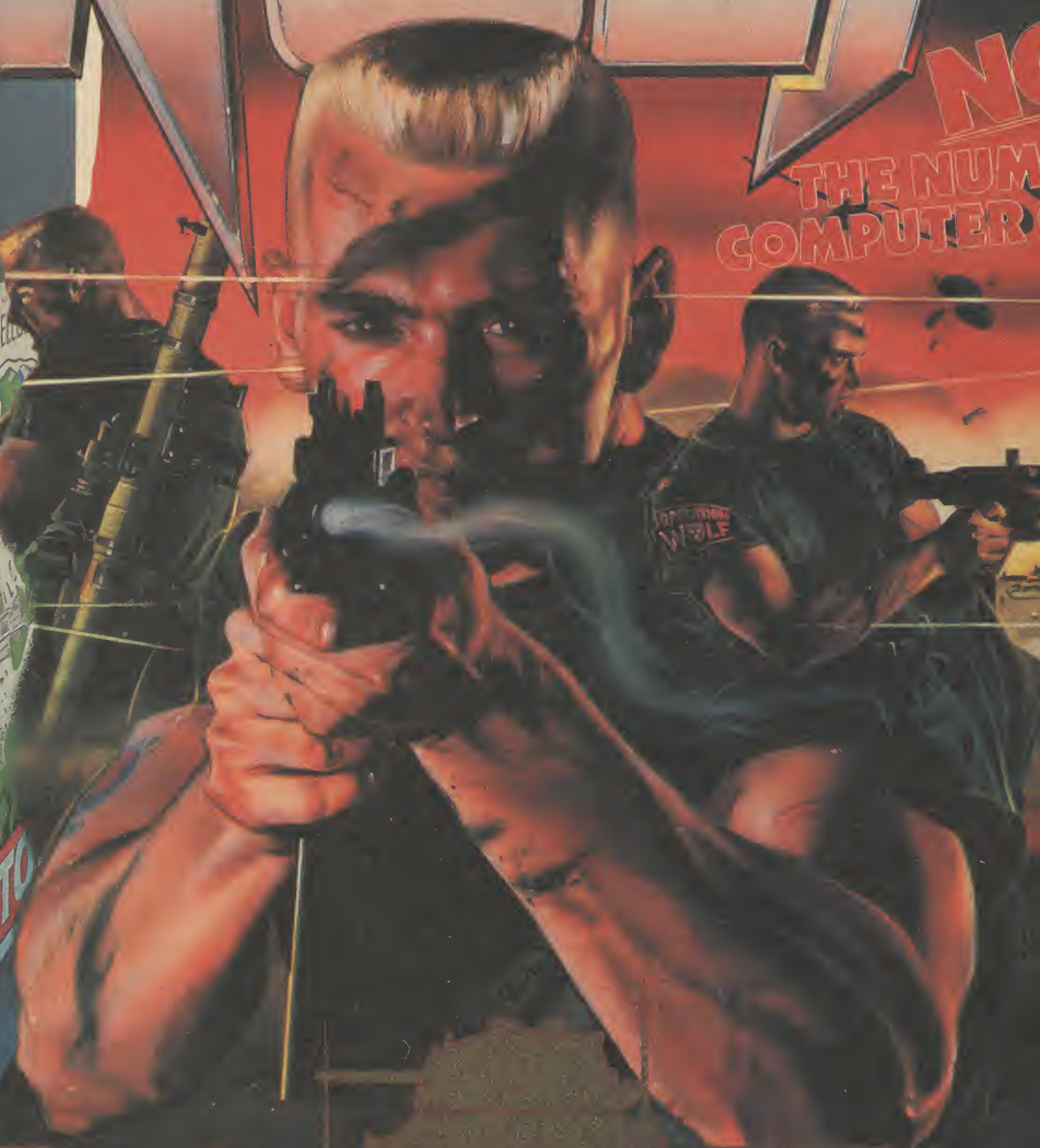
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Laser Squad — sheer genius. P.89.



Armalyte — the maps. P.128.

Fax Sexy games from France, win a ghetto blaster and a packet of Chewits every year plus all that's hot in computer games. **8**

Operation Wolf **20**

Game of the year? We review all versions including a World exclusive — first full evaluation of the ST copy.

R-Type Win the coin-op. Your very own 'master blaster' for your bedroom. **28**

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games tastes the bitter and sweet flavour of C+VG reviews. Afterburner scores a Hit (P.52), as does Savage (p.66) and Lazer Squad

(P.89) which Tony Dillon thinks is one of the most brilliant and underrated games of the year — so there, plus IK+ is meaner than mean on the ST

(P.74), and Turbo Cup from Loriciels shows that the French know what's what when it comes to racing games (P.78) — all that and Emllyn Hughes

pops in to pick up a C+VG Hit for his C64 tooty game. What ever computer you've got — C+VG knows best.

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Funny Old Game, Innit Cecil! **98**

"Robson Out, Robson Out, Robson Out". The fans want to know about good computer football. Tony Dillon has the answers.

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Minson jaws with Gerry Anderson (Thunderbirds man) about his new film, computer games, and Lou Tennant.

Subscriptions

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Afterburner — C+VG scoop review. P.



Frame Up is back. P.



Specy Op Wolf? Wrong — Sega hit. P.163.

Don't miss...

Big changes are sweeping C+VG. Tony Takoushi gets the boot as Julian Rignall takes over our re-vamped Mean Machines column – bringing you all that's hot, and some of what's not, on the Nintendo, Sega, and PC Engine.

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Operation Wolf – Atari ST exclusive review. P.20.



Rambo III.

Naughty Larry is back in AGM. P.106.

SPRINGBOARD DIVING—Cool nerves, total concentration, split second timing, and not a small measure of artistic flair will determine your scores as you strive for as near perfect execution as is humanly possible.

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Twisting Circuits

The barrage of car racing games continues apace, with two newbies from Mandarin and Accolade taking their places firmly in the realistic simulations camp, as opposed to the Roadblasters school of fantasy. Grand Prix Circuit is a Formula One sim for the PC (shown, £24.95) and the C64 (£9.95/14.95) from Accolade. Racing around such famous courses as Detroit and Monaco, you compete against nine other drivers in a choice of McLaren, Williams or Ferrari cars. There are five levels of difficulty, pit stops to slow you down and the de rigueur opponents seen edging up in the wing mirrors.

Mandarin software have taken a slightly more unusual route and created a rally game based around the Lombard/RAC rally. Here you sit behind the wheel of a Ford Sierra RS Cosworth as you plough through four different stages, including through a wood and night driving. With help from Ford and the RAC the game is promised to be a faithful rendition of the hairpin bends and dangerous surfaces of rally driving. Released initially on ST and Amiga (£24.95) budding drivers on other systems should be able to join the fun in the new year.



Elite Bits

Elite have Space Harrier 2 on ST (£19.95) and Amiga (£24.95) available in November amongst other major new releases. Mike Reid's Pop Quiz should also be out at about the same time to join the other trivia quizzes competing for the Christmas sales.



The 8 bit Rastan look-a-like Storm Warrior is also due this year, at standard prices for Amstrad, Spec and 64, but the latest competitor in the racing wars, Supertrux, will wait until January. At £9.99 for 8 bit, hurling those four tonne monsters round a track might be fun.

As far as crazy arcade game ideas are concerned, there's no one to touch the Japanese. As if any more proof were needed, we saw this whacky remote control cars

set-up on a recent trip to Tokyo. A bank of converted Outrun sit-down machines contain the pilots of the six racing cars, each of whom sees the course via a video camera mounted in the snout of his car. The course is pretty complicated and the effect is apparently "brilliant", though don't hold your breath for them to appear down the local sea front



Terror Baal

Psygnosis have one of their strongest ever 16 bit releases available for ST and Amiga (£19.95) around the time you read this. BAAL is a multi-level scrolling platform shoot 'em up with some stunning screens. You guide "Time Warriors" through a series of tunnels and platforms in an attempt to destroy the many scattered components of an alien death machine. One to watch out for Christmas, and while it looks as visually excellent as their very similar "Obliterator", we hope that it plays a bit more smoothly.





Gremlin's Motor Massacre is an all-systems post-apocalyptic racing game to join all the other post-apocalyptic racing games. Lots of thrills, spills and destruction are promised, as well as an unusual top view of the action (available November).

Motorway Madness

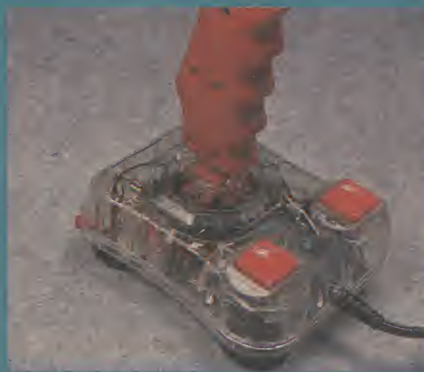
Pun of the month must this time go to Elektra Software for the title of their new – if unfinished – adventure, "Let Sleeping Gods Lie". This is an unfinished early screenshot, but the whole thing looks most biz arre.

Pun of the month



Mr Joystick Radio Comp

One of the things many of you may be finding your stockings this Christmas – it's not so far away, you know! – is a new joystick. The Mister Joystick range from Powerplay have a number available, from the Blue, Black (£9.99) and clear (£12.99 with autofire) Cruiser range, to the new, more upmarket Crystal model. These are all truly clear – as opposed to being merely opaque like most 'clear' sticks – with red handle and particularly snazzy innards. The standard model comes at £14.99 with the fast auto-fire equipped Turbo model coming in at £16.99. To celebrate, we have a Christmas present even better than a joystick to give away: the Sony Sound Bag. This is a portable, high quality radio cassette encased in a soft, squidgy bag for style and user-friendliness. To win it, we'd ask you to come up with a new name for a whizzo top of the range joystick that you reckon everyone would rush out to buy. Give some technical details of it too if you want – even draw a picture. We'll chose the one we like the look of best, and should we manage to resist taking the prize home ourselves, someone will get an extra Xmas pressie.



Mail Call

There can be few characters in popular culture who haven't been computer gamerised at some point or other. And there could scarcely be such a popular hero, nay icon, as the bubbling and effervescent Postman Pat. Therefore: Pat should become a computer game. Now the unthinkable has come true. Top budget label Alternative have bought their first ever license for a character, and intend to have an 8 bit hit in the shops for Christmas. Quite how you can make a game out of the thrilling adventures of a postie – Paperboy notwithstanding – we await with interest, but we look forward to the appearance of the black and white cat.



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Silver
Plate?

3rd Festival de la Micro: The trials and tribulations of a Yorkshireman in Paris.

Show report by Matt à Paris

For the seasoned British PC Show goer, the first impression of the Paris Festival would be of something small and sober. The largest stands were little bigger than your average living room, there was only one free play coin-op around (Operation Wolf) and the show bimbos were conspicuous by their absence.

Only Titus bothered having a big set piece on their stand (a Ferrari) and worst of all, there was no bar.

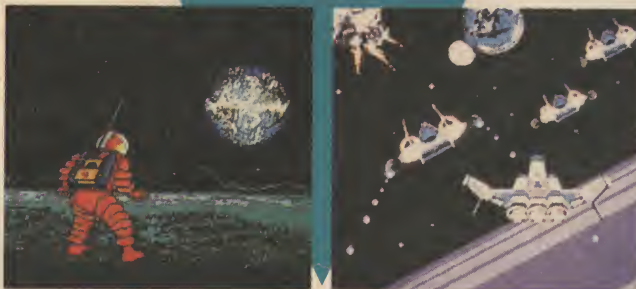
The Titus stand had Crazy Cars 2, which looked about 150% better than its predecessor. You drive an ultra-rare, ultra-expensive and ultra-ultra quick Ferrari F40 across four American states, steering clear of police and other road users with user of your radar detector. It should be available for Amiga/ST/PC/Amstrad in November and Spec/64 next year.



Oye, at the (imagined) Comic Con I saw a young American in a medieval adventure called Mithras in Venice which was based on a movie coming in French that which featured a very impressive knowledge of the Grand Canal. They also had a fair bit of a good-looking but rather too much for us comic book characters and an unusual thing with a number of characters and skin-diver, rather like Mithras, a kind of a comic book.

Over at Mithras, which was a medieval adventure game, a young man from Trackers was being taken to the prison. You were your own woman's private island while the only way to get to the prison was to go to the prison in France, though the game was a very good one. In fact, the game was described by one person as being much better than the game as the Eddie Edwards Superski thing, but with bikes replacing skis.

An almost finished police game, which was a highway Patrol also shared the stand, along with a 3D flying game called Eagle Rider. This was unusual in that you played a helicopter and the game was a control plane. Loricels



shared this stand, though in a very low key way and with no product to push.

Coktel Vision had a number of new

German games which they handle the distribution

for on show, but their main effort was with an adventure game called Freedom based on the escape of slaves from a Caribbean plantation.

This had some nice graphics and a Barbarian style fight scene, but perhaps overshadowed by another adventure based on Jules Verne's 2000 Leagues Under the Sea. As told by the captured sailor Ned, it tells of the escape from Nemo's

Nautilus, fights with sharks etc. In the section of the show taken over completely by Atari there was a fairly large education section which — before you stop reading completely — had some nice looking 16 bit programmes for five year olds. The graphics of bunnies and so on were as good as you get in most "proper" games. In fact, there were a



number of products aimed at the younger player. Coktel's short but sweet Peter Pan game was quite good to see over here soon enough. "Yipee!" says a rather bland Peter in sampled tones, as he competes in a number of very simple Pinman style mazes and so on.

One of these sort games involved picking flowers. I mean, really!

Outside the main entrance there was a rather busy scene going on on the first day. Since the whole complex was underground, marked only by a sign which appeared to be pointing in nothing more than a full away spirit of Stomphenge, some people were in confusion as to where to go. In fact, the 2nd floor down were hidden between the arches, but an enterprising computer shop near the main section exit had diverted many into their store by plastering the windows with massive "Welcome to the show" signs. Clever move, that.

The night show was a rather festive 2nd Micro in the evening for many expressed hopes that Amiga would follow it up with their own night show (which was a big show) which would be a real news allround. The French software industry is certainly doing very well and increasing these days — particularly for the computer industry — and deserves something bigger.

Fax

Axxiom Stations

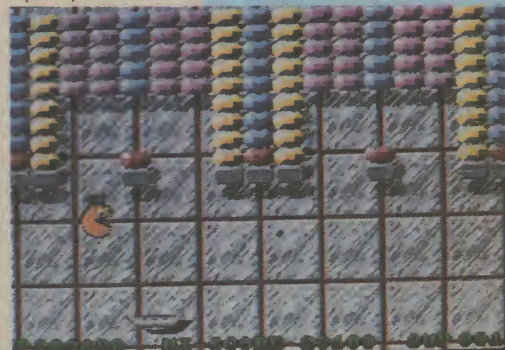
German Software house Axxiom are starting to be distributed in the UK, and intend to be one of the bigger names in the 16 bit arena by the end of next year, or so. Their first three releases are all to be available before Christmas on the Amiga, though later ST versions will be available. Way of the Little Dragon, which they see as being potentially the first hit, is a karate game to be played against either the



Way of the Little Dragon.

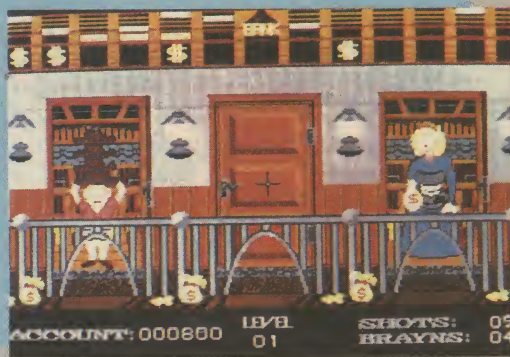


Spaceport.



Crystal Hammer.

machine or another player. Graphics are rather nice, though gameplay is less than original; an accusation that could be quite easily levelled against the other games as well. Crystal Hammer is a Breakout/Arkanoid clone, while Powerstyx bears a remarkable similarity to old fave Qix; you must build up a picture by sectioning off portions of the screen with your cursor, while avoiding the hostile skulls and so on whose touch means death. Later releases include Gunshoot, a cowboy game; a 3D helicopter sim called Skyblaster; and Spaceport, where you pilot a helicopter through underground caverns. All games will be £14.95 which makes for very good value. Watch C+VG for the first reviews.



Gunshoot.

Take a Butchers at This

Jungle warfare: it's just the ticket these days, isn't it? Looking not too dissimilar to the game that has just graced almost ever magazine cover under the sun — though to be fair it is no clone — is Gremlin's Butcher Hill. Through three sections — a rubber dingy ride down a river, on foot through a jungle and a village — you make your way through Vietnam to "Butcher Hill". It's a shoot 'em up for Spec, Amstrad, 64, ST and Amiga in January.



SPECTRUM TOP TEN

1	Bomb Jack - Encore
2	Joe Blade 2 - Players
3	D. T'sons Olym Chall - Ocean
4	Track Suit Manager - Goliath
5	Gauntlet - Kixx
6	Typhoon - Ocean
7	1943 - US Gold
8	Football Manager 2 - Addictive
9	Battleships - Encore
10	Eur. Five-a-side - Firebird

Typhoon, a new entry, does well and can be expected to do better in the coming months. More full price games in the chart than there have been for months as the budget houses slip and the market braces itself for Christmas.

AMIGA TOP FIVE

1	Star Glider - Rainbird
2	D. T'son's Olym Chall - Ocean
3	Interceptor - Electronic arts
4	Corrier Command - Rainbird
5	Garfield - the Edge

Daley and Gorfield are new entries, while the rest of the chart stays EXACTLY the same as last time. i.e. Star Glider 2 stays right at the top.

ALL FORMATS COMBINED TOP TEN

1	D. T'son's Olym Chall - Ocean
2	Joe Blade 2 - Players
3	Bomb Jack - Encore
4	Ghostbusters - Mastertronic
5	Kik Start 2 - Mastertronic
6	Track Suit Manager - Goliath
7	Football Manager 2 - Addictive
8	Yogi Bear - Alternative
9	1943 - US Gold
10	Soccer Boss - Alternative

Daley Thompson may not have managed it at the Olympics, but he finally makes number one in the software charts, while new entry 1943 puts in sterling service for US Gold. Best selling individual version, however, is the C64 version of Barbarian 2.

ARCADE ACTION



From the SNK stable, the coin-op smash hit now for your home micro. This multi-level, vertically scrolling arcade thriller throws you deep into the jungles and ruined cities of a nation held in the grip of a cruel oppressor. Freedom is your aim ... Guerrilla War is the means!

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£9.95

SPECTRUM

£8.95

Fax

Software Circus

This is the opening of a shop called Software Circus deep in the heart of London. It is unique in that — it's claimed — it is Britain's first store selling computer software only. The Oxford Street shop has both business and games programs on sale, and aims to be the first of a national chain of about 50. Already there are plans for a second in London, with more to come.

It might be an idea to pop into the Plaza centre and check it out if you're ever in the area — boss man Steven Markham seems pretty confident they'll soon be the *Forbidden Planet* of computer games.



Go!'s deal with arcade mega-company Capcom bears first fruit with the (almost) simultaneous release of new game *L.E.D. Storm* on both home computer and arcade. The game, which only recently arrived in European arcades, will be launched in December on all major formats.

It is yet another tale of road racing over empty, post-nuclear wasteland in the tradition of *Road Blasters* and *Overlander*, though graphically it looks possibly better than either. Nine levels of varied terrain, dotted with ramps, broken bridges and other hazards beckon for

Spectrum (£8.99/12.99), Amstrad and C64 (£9.99/14.99), ST (£19.99) and Amiga (£24.99).



Storm Warning

German

German correspondent Carsten Borgmeier is at it again, with all the new product coming out of Magic Bytes, Rainbow Arts and more...

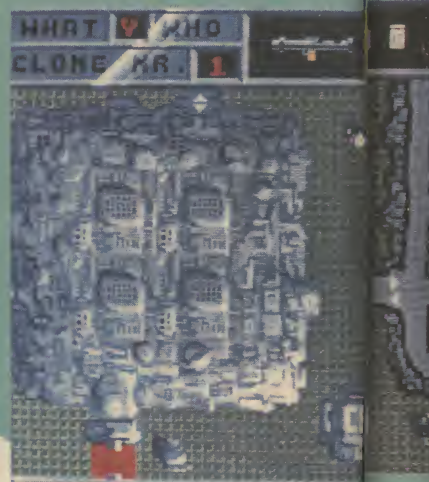
Softgold, who handle the international marketing of products from many German software houses, including Rainbow Arts and Reline, is currently touting a whole range of new stuff on the German market. Games we can expect to see in the near(ish) future include *Graffiti Man*, in which you must prove yourself by spraying walls in eight different locations — in the face of opposition from police, grannies and other such upstanding citizens Anti-social or what?!

Down at the Trolls comes under the less controversial category of fantasy adventure, allowing up to eight players to fight through a labyrinth of tunnels.

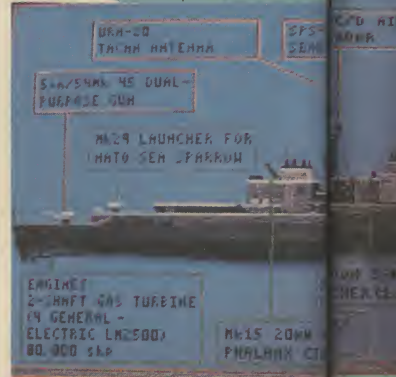
Oxxonian is a four way scrolling thingie where you must run around beaming hostile creatures back to their home planet, while *Danger Freak* features three long levels of stuntman sim, including motorcycle stunts, hanging from helicopters and other such foolhardy stuff.

Also available now in Germany are an adventure game centered on the story of *Joan of Arc*, and *Starball*, which looks like a cross between a Breakout clone and those tennis games which were among the first ever video games.

Towards the end of February these will be joined by *Grand Monster Slam*, a dueling game in which trolls, goblins and dwarfs compete by hurling "living



▲ The Parano complex



USS John Young. ▼

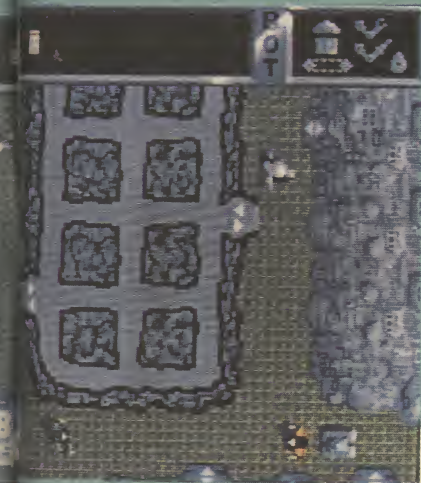
▼ Danger Freak.



balls" at each other. *Circus Circus*, based around various big top acts, is out at the same time too. Most of these games are on 64, ST and Amiga, with some also on Amstrad and IBM. Meanwhile, in the Magic Bytes camp, the end of the year will see a bizarre thing called *The Parano Complex* which works like the computerised city equivalent of *Gauntlet*. You and your

faithful robot must serve the giant computer by killing those citizens powerful enough to be a danger to it and so rise the social ladder yourself, be careful though — once you start to do your job well, the computer may decide you are efficient enough to be a danger! *Mini Golf* is self explanatory while *Wall Street* — an attempt at a stock market sim, promises not to be a

Bytes (II)

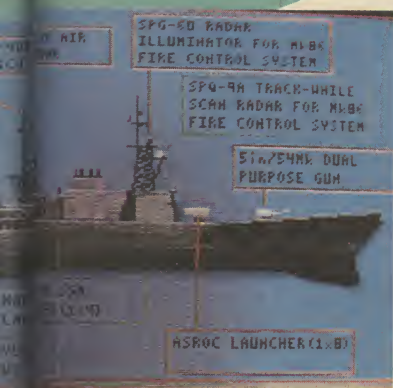


strong theme for German programmers – the *North Sea Inferno* game mentioned in the October is now to be called – you guessed it – *Persian Gulf Inferno*! Biggest news of change though comes direct from the mouth of one Marc Alexander Ullrich, M.D. of Rainbow Arts. "After some trouble with Nintendo and Mediagenic because of the Mario Brothers clone *Giana Sisters II* and the R-Type clone *Katakis*, Rainbow Arts first hesitated to bring it (sic) on the market. But now they decided to change some sprites and bring it out under new names. *Katakis* will be called *Denaris* will be out very soon on Amiga and C64 in France and the UK.

Giana Sisters gets another name which is not sure yet. This brilliant clone will be out the beginning of next year."

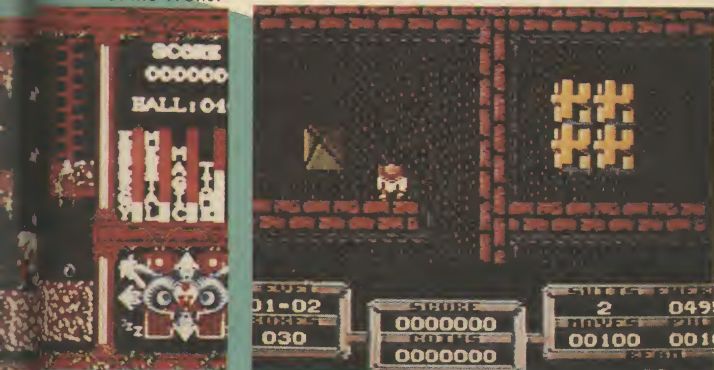
At least he admits they're straight clones, but *Denaris* still looks, at the very least, uncomfortably close to its inspiration, and whether name changes are enough to stop new action being taken remains to be seen.

And that's the news from Germany, just between us!



▼ Down at the Trolls.

▼ Oxxonian.



caffling as the real thing.

Best of the bunch looks to be *USS John Young*, a solid vector graphics game for C64 and 16 bit machines, based not on flight of any sort – but on modern naval warfare. You must play the captain of a US destroyer in the Persian Gulf of the near future, battling Iranians, Soviets and all sorts. In fact the Persian Gulf seems to be a

Video Star



You see here the best Christmas present for '88 that will not be.

The Sony Video Walkman will be available some time in the new year, at a price about the same as a good non-portable VCR (a few hundred pounds).

Using an 8mm video cassette the GV-8 has a three inch LCD screen with 92,160 resolution and offers up to three hours play at a shot. Using dry cell batteries it can be watched on the bus or tube or wherever, though we wouldn't recommend the car battery power source option for true portability.

It can record both from TV and through a portable video camera, though what

quality will be like we don't know. All in all, it

makes you almost look forward to '89, and could soon be seen on every bus, train and park bench in the land.

Chewits Eat-Until-You're -Ill Compo

To tie in ever so neatly with Gremlin's release of the Chewit's "Muncher" game (see JR's thumbs up review this issue) we have an extra neat munching compo. Ten C+VG readers can get a year's supply of our fave fruity sweets (i.e. 365 packets) simply by writing in to tell us what flavour that they don't already make you'd like to see cluttering up the local newsagent's shelves, and a big box of the things could be yours. Now why not check out the review on page thirty eight?



Name

Address

New Chewits flavour and why

AFTERBURNER

AERIAL ARCADE ACE

SHAKE. RA



 **ACTIVISION**

SEGA[®]

AFTERBURNER – 'THE ARCADE SE

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Available on C64 cassette (£9.99) and disk (£14.99), Spectrum (£12.99),

Amiga (£24.99)

Am
and

RATTLE. ROLL IT..



Amiga screen shots shown



ST screen shots shown

SENSATION OF THE YEAR'

AFTERBURNER – You've played the arcade **smash** – now **experience** the white-knuckled **realism** of a supersonic **dogfight** at home! Using your heat-seeking **missiles** and laser anti-aircraft **fire**, can you be **top gun** against a seething supersonic **swarm**?

Experience brain-numbing **G-forces**; bones **rattling** with the body-jarring **pitch** and yaw... **scan** with your **radar**, **lock on** your target and **FIRE!**

Amstrad cassette (£9.99) and disk (£14.99), Atari ST (£24.99),
and MSX (£9.99).

Fax

Sticky Decision

This here is a Spectrum look at Dark Fusion, a new 8 bit shoot 'em up from Gremlin. Fight nasty aliens and all that stuff, but you'll also find you have to fuse your own lifeform with that of your failed foes (ick!) to survive. Big monsters at the end of levels and all that jazz no doubt, out early December.



Come Play With Me...?

Forget Robo-cop. Forget The Running Man and Die Hard: this is the film license they'll all be talking about. Not on show in Paris, but due from Cocktail Vision before Christmas, is Emmanuelle – a computer game based on the famous soft-core porn flick! Apart from the fact that it is an adventure based closely on the plot of the original film – whatever that was – details are vague at the moment. More news as and when...



Roy's a Boy Toy

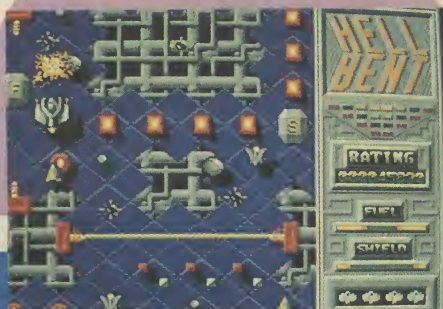
Footie games continue to come out of the woodwork at a quite alarming rate – just check out



Chubby Dillon's round up on page 98 – and not least of these is Gremlin's Roy of the Rovers. This is a Spectrum look at a game that will have been released just before this mag goes on sale – check out the full review soon. Roy's fictitious team Melchester wear red and yellow vests, we believe, which doesn't seem to have some over too well on the Speccy!

Hellbent

Keen not to get lost in the Christmas rush – "hellbent" you might say – is this new 16 bit release from Novagen. A scrolling shoot 'em up for ST and Amiga, Hellbent is the company's third 16 bit release, and the first done by someone other than company boss Paul Woakes – in this case a young chappie with the unlikely name of "Donovan Prince".



AMSTRAD TOP TEN

1	Daley T'san Olym Chall – Ocean
2	Adv. Pinball Sim – Cade Masters
3	Kik Start 2 – Mastertronic
4	Joe Blade 2 – players
5	Bamb Jack – Encore
6	Air Wolf – Encore
7	Ace of Aces – Kixx
8	Glider Rider – Bug Byte
9	Ghostbusters – Mastertronic
10	Game Over 2 – Dinamic

Advanced Pinball, Glider Rider and Game Over 2 are all new entries. Sales are low, but expected to rise sharply as the strong Christmas product gets a hold.

C64 TOP TEN

1	Barbarian 2 – Palace
2	Daley Thomp Oly Chall – Ocean
3	1943 – US Gold
4	Track Suit Manager – Goliath
5	Football Manager 2 – Addictive
6	Bamb Jack – Encore
7	Gold, Silver and Bronze – US Gold
8	Supreme Challenge – Beau Jolly
9	Pro Ski Simulator – Cade Masters
10	Joe Blade 2 – Players

Compilations like Supreme Challenge and Gold, Silver... do well while the top two games in the ten: Bomb Jack, Pro Ski and Joe B.

ATARI ST TOP FIVE

1	Star Glider 2 – Rainbird
2	STOS Game Creator – Mandarin
3	Virus – Firebird
4	Where Time Stood Still – Ocean
5	Dungeon Master – Mirrorsoft

Night Raider and Lancelot are both new entries at 7 and 8 while Strip Poker and Dungeon Master reenter and Star Glider 2 begins to slide, while retaining the top spot.

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Reviews

OPERATION WOLF

► **MACHINES:** ATARI ST, AMIGA, C64, SPECTRUM, AMSTRAD.
 ► **SUPPLIER:** OCEAN.
 ► **PRICES:** £8.90 SPECTRUM, £9.95 C64, AND PLUS 3 DISKS £14.95, ST £19.95, AMIGA £24.95.
 ► **REVIEWER:** EUGENE LACEY.

Operation Wolf – or 'Op-Wolf' as most addicts call it – is definitely the coin-op of the year. OK, I know, you are pig sick of

Chances are it is also the game with a cluster of gamers huddled around it.

When you have your first go you can easily get the impression that all the game amounts to is a case of swivelling that Uzi on its base and spraying the enemy with machine gun fire – attacking anything that moves.

Nothing could be further from the truth. Although



▲ Gunboats blast you in the jungle level.



▲ Armoured cars patrol the concentration camp.

that phrase "coin-op of the year". I know all the ads claim that their coin-op conversion is the one that all the punters are pumping their dosh into. Well, there is nothing I can do about all this hype – all I can tell you is that the official arcade industry charts prove that *Op-Wolf* is the real number one. And if that isn't conclusive enough for you, the game is also the one that the C+VG team have put more '40ps' into than anything else this year.

There is no missing the game in your local arcade. It's the one with the Uzi machine gun mounted on the front of its vast, bulky cabinet.

you are armed to the teeth – with stacks of bullets and grenades – you have to make every bullet count if you are to succeed in your mission of freeing the hostages.

The game is divided up into six different levels. Each one must be successfully completed before you proceed to the next – and in the right order as well – if you are to succeed in your objective.

The use of the machine gun was definitely a neat frill – that attracted many gamers to the machine in the first place. But the coin-op offers much more than this simple gimmick. The quality of the graphics easily surpass anything



▲ Terrorist takes aim with his pistol.

ATTENTION

LE

that had been achieved previously in military shoot-ems up like *Green Beret* and *Combat School*.

The use of the Uzi led many people to believe that its absence in the home versions would make the game unconvertible. Mike Pattenden, for example, writing in the December '87 edition of CU said "Why do they bother? Are they going to

issue an Uzi sub-machine gun with every copy".

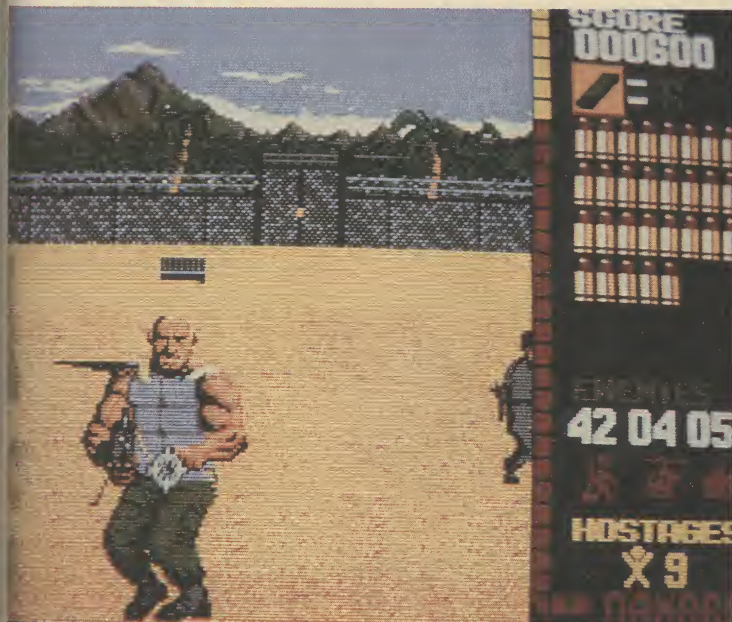
Ocean's programmers came up with a far cheaper solution. They simply replaced the gun with a floating on-screen cross hair. Controlled by joystick or mouse, you simply move the cross-hair to the target and press fire. OK – so its not quite as good as handling, and feeling the weight of the Uzi pressing against your

Level 1 is set in the Communications compound where your aim is to cut the enemy off and stop them from calling up more reinforcements.

The enemy constantly fire at you, lobbing grenades, throwing knives, and – should you let them hover – straffing you from helicopter gunships.

Each hit weakens you and makes your Damage Barometer tick downwards. If it reaches zero it's curtains, and a grim sounding voice will inform that "Sorry you are finished here" (only on ST and Amiga versions).

The aim of the game is to avoid sustain hits by



▲ Into the action by paratrooper, parachute.



▲ Skinhead mercenary lets fly with his bazooka.



▲ Blasts that torpedo before it blasts you.

shoulder blade – but from just about every other angle this game has to be ranked as one of the best conversions ever.

In terms of the consistent quality of the game across a variety of machines it definitely is the best ever.

What I particularly like about the original game design is the way it simulates the strategic – as well as the blood and guts of the battle. The six levels are: The communications set-up, the jungle, the village, the powder magazine, the concentration camp, and the airport.

Each level sets you a specific task which helps a little towards your goal of freeing the hostages.

shooting the grenades out before they hit you and eliminating the soldiers before they take aim.

Get through this and you find yourself in the jungle of **Level 2** where your mission is to extract information from the enemy about the concentration camp.

Level 3 is not for pacifists. You are ordered to go into the village and kill all the enemies whilst at the same time to "take a rest" I should point out the amidst all this glorification of war *Op Wolf* does have some semblance of conscience – there are hostages civilians fleeing from the mayhem – and nurses trotting across the battlefield carrying the wounded on their

FIVE FIST-FULLS OF S

ROY OF THE ROVERS

NEWSFLASH! Four of the Melchester Rovers five-a-side football team have been kidnapped... hours before a crucial fund-raising game to save their ground from grasping property developers. Time is running out and player-manager Roy Race **MUST** rescue his team-mates, dodging danger, escaping ambushes and boobytraps in order to play the most important game of his career!

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GARY LINEKER'S HOT SHOT

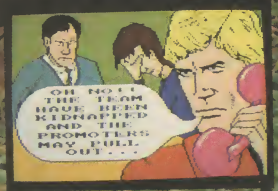
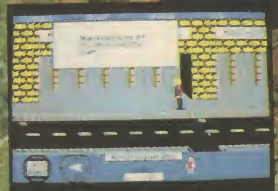
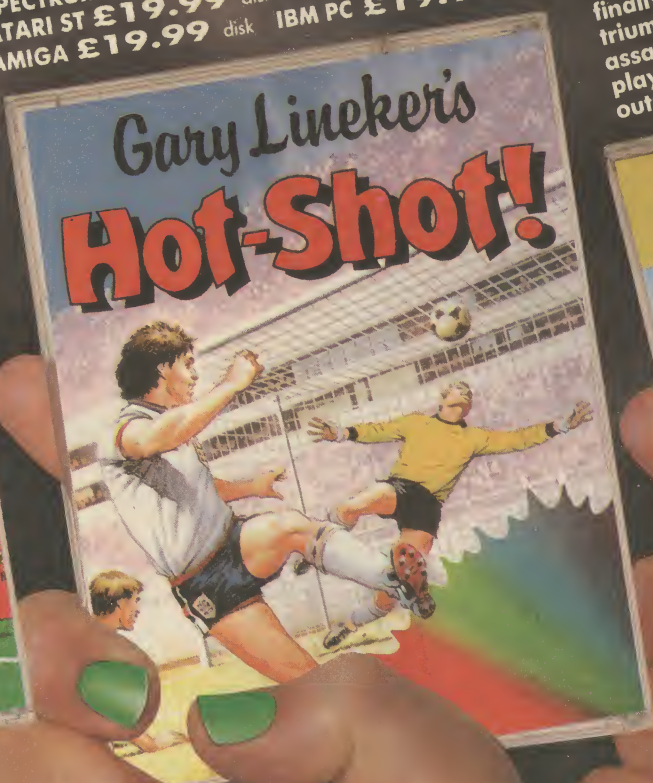
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Screen shots from various formats.

SPORTING POWER

GARY LINEKER'S SUPERSKILLS

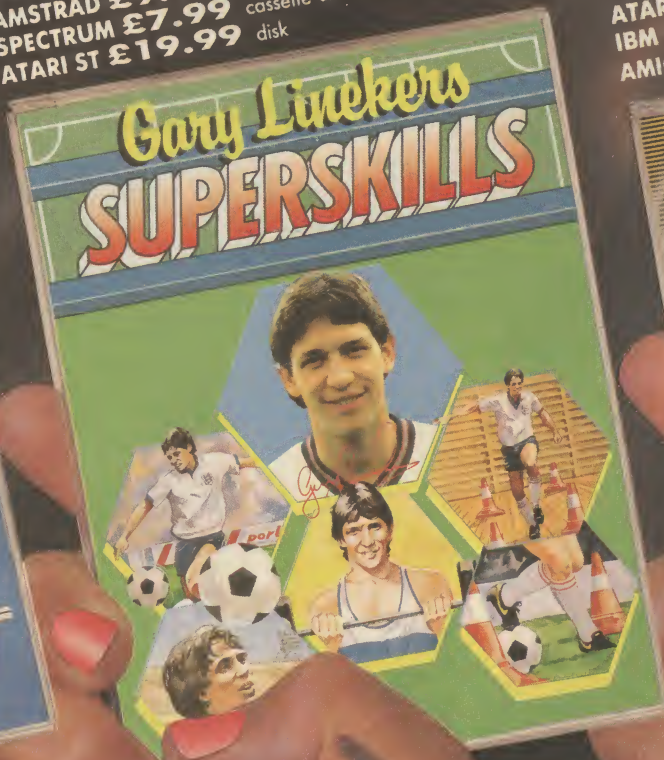
Hot on the heels of the hugely successful Superstar Soccer comes Superskills, again endorsed by England's star striker. To command a permanent place in the national team means dedication – dedication towards hard work and training. The national coach has designed an extensive training programme which will improve your fitness, ball control, sharpness and accuracy. Can you prove yourself to be both physically and mentally agile and alert?

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Reviews

stretchers. Should your bullets accidentally hit any of these you are punished by losing energy.

Level 4 is set in the enemy's ammunition dumps – your task is to "take the ammunition by force".

If you survive this far you get your first chance to rescue some of the hostages. **Level 5** has five hostages incarcerated in the concentration camp. Your orders are to "help them".

You have to a pretty good Op Wolf player to get to the **Level 6**. Set in the airport – this is where the remainder of the hostages are being held. Your orders are to rescue the hostages in the airplane and get away.

The gameplay of the various levels is essentially the same. The battle field scrolls slowly from left to right – your cross hair gun site panning across with it. The enemy rush on from both sides – in three set planes. There are soldiers in the foreground that practically fill the screen when they dash on middle sized ones in the mid

ground, and dozens of troopers that dash across the screen in twos and threes in the far distance.

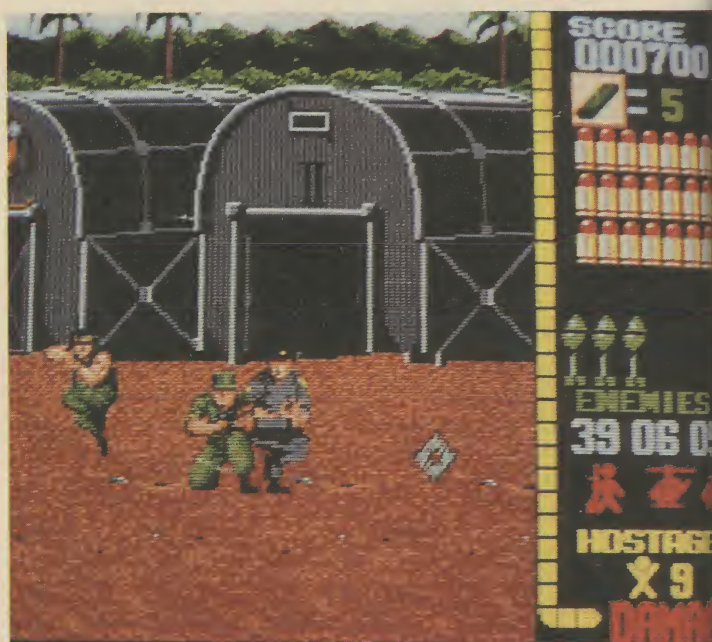
Depending on what level you are on the tanks, lorries, motorcyclists, choppers, or gun boats (in the jungle level) usually arrive in the foreground.

The game is at its best when you take out the enemy vehicles. You can knock them out with persistent Uzi fire but the most effective method is to use the grenade launcher. You can even take out two vehicles with one massive boom.

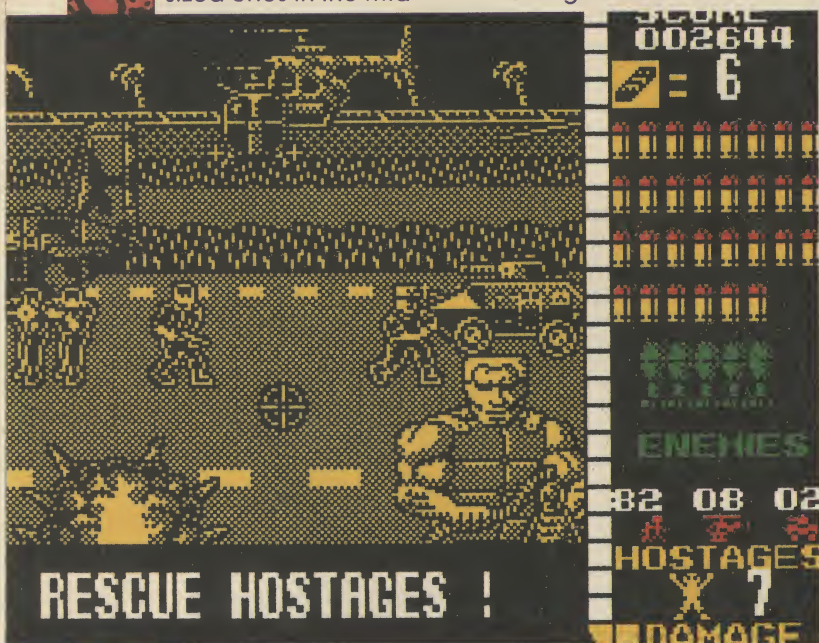
The lorries rip apart when the grenade hits them and go up in a ball of flame and grey smoke. Trouble is you have to be careful not to waste your grenades as you only have five of them at the beginning of each level. (Which is why a certain, nameless C+VG reviewer's policy of blasting the nurses with grenades as soon as they appeared is not particularly recommended).

Special mention has to be made of the quality of the graphics on the ST and Amiga versions – the armoured cars, choppers, and gun boats are

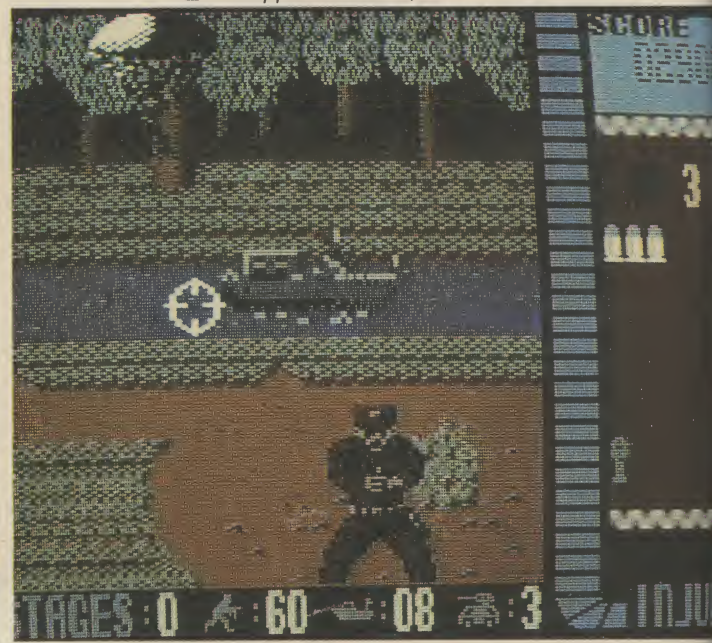
OPERATION WOLF



▲ St chopper... coin-op... chopper... now thats a version



▲ Monochromatic but excellent Speccy version.



▲ C64 version – smooth 'n' pretty.

ATTENTION

WOLF

Identical to their counterparts in the coin-op.

I suppose a certain degree of near-coin-op graphics is now taken for granted in ST and Amiga conversions – but what pleased me particularly on the ST version is the little details of game play that have not been forgotten. The tricks that you discover

after you have played Op-Wolf a good few times, like shooting the birds, and the pig that scampers on to pick up more ammo. It is this kind of attention to detail that makes for a good coin-op conversion irrespective of the graphical capabilities of the computer you are playing the game on.

The software tycoons are having right battle royal this Christmas. Bets are being placed, claims are being made as to who will be number one. It reminds me of the famous Bill Shankly quote about football being much more important than, life, or death, or something like that. To you *Op Wolf*, *Afterburner*, and *Thunderblade* may just be games. To the tycoons they are company profits, reputations, image and a whole host of other things. C+VG doesn't take sides in



these matters. We just review the games. So what is our advice should you only be buying one coin-op conversion this Christmas? Buy *Op – Wolf* – it's a brilliant conversion and you will get a lot of fun out of it.

UPDATE . . .

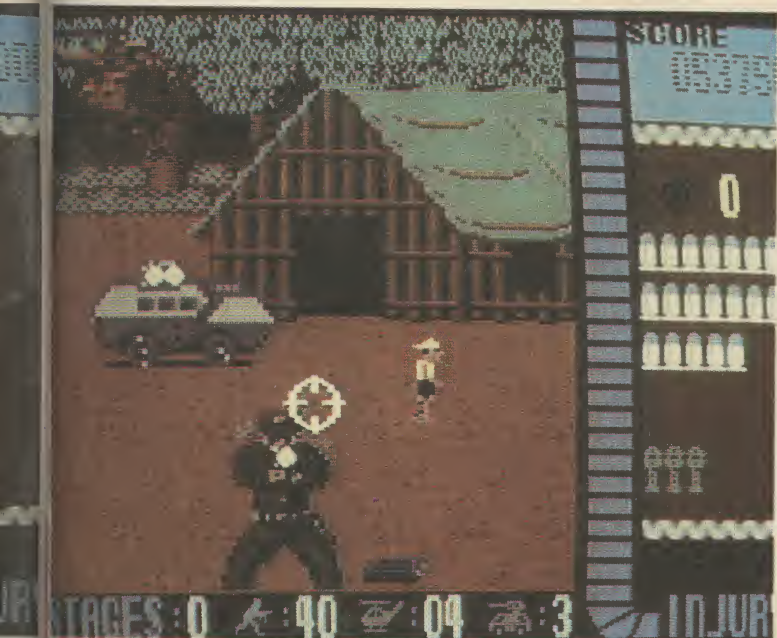
Op Wolf will be out on all formats by the end of November. The PC version is being coded in the US and won't be ready until next year. Expect big things from the Amiga version – like ultra smooth scrolling, speed and improved digitised speech. *Sega Rambo III* is an *Op Wolf* clone, and an officially licensed Nintendo version will be on sale next year.



conversion.

COMMENT- CATION SETUP	POWER MAGAZINE	CONCENT- RATION CAMP	SCORE 00000
1st = 50 2nd = 40 3rd = 5	1st = 50 2nd = 40 3rd = 5	1st = 50 2nd = 40 3rd = 5	1st = 50 2nd = 40 3rd = 5
JUNGLE	VILLAGE	AIRPORT	ENEMIES 50 04 1
1st = 50 2nd = 40 3rd = 5	1st = 50 2nd = 40 3rd = 5	1st = 50 2nd = 40 3rd = 5	HOSTAGE X 9 DAMAGE

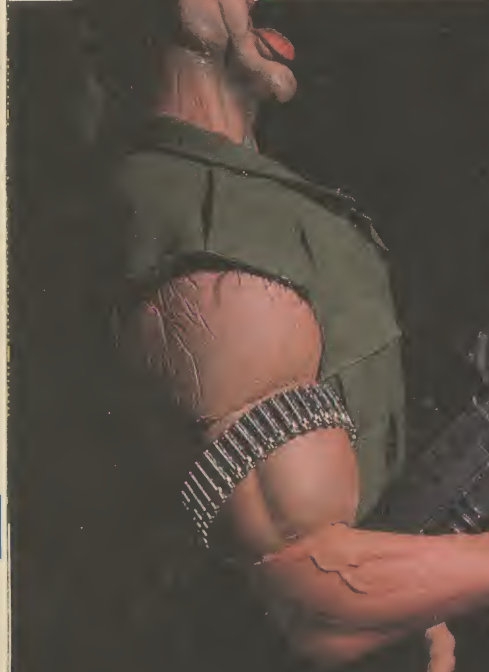
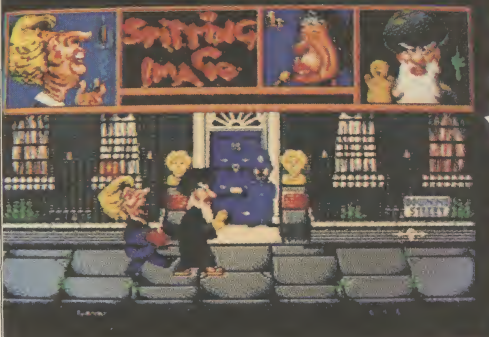
	ST	SPECTRUM	C64
▶ GRAPHICS	9	8	9
▶ SOUND	9	9	8
▶ VALUE	8	9	9
▶ PLAYABILITY	9	9	9
▶ OVERALL	91%	91%	92%



▲ Kaboom – the C64 shudders with explosions.



▲ Watch out for the dagger.



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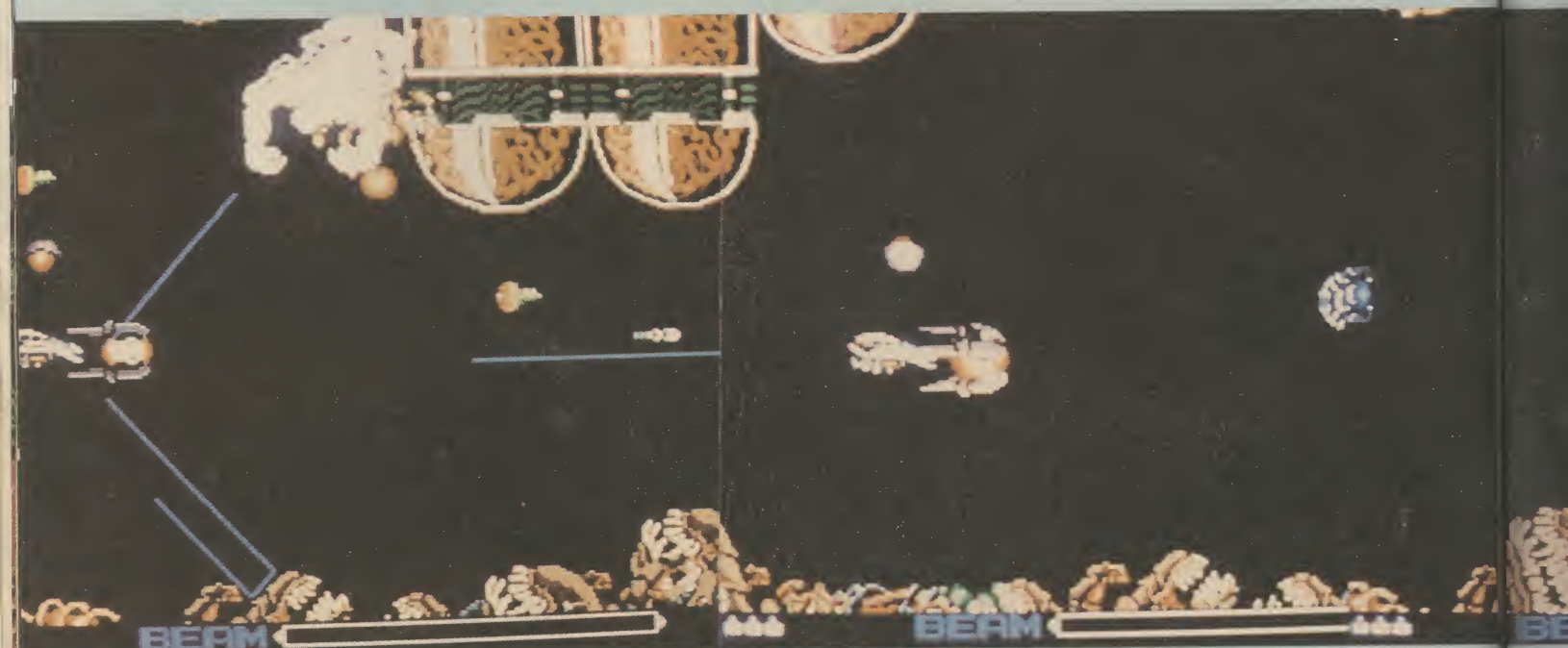
COMPUTER GAME



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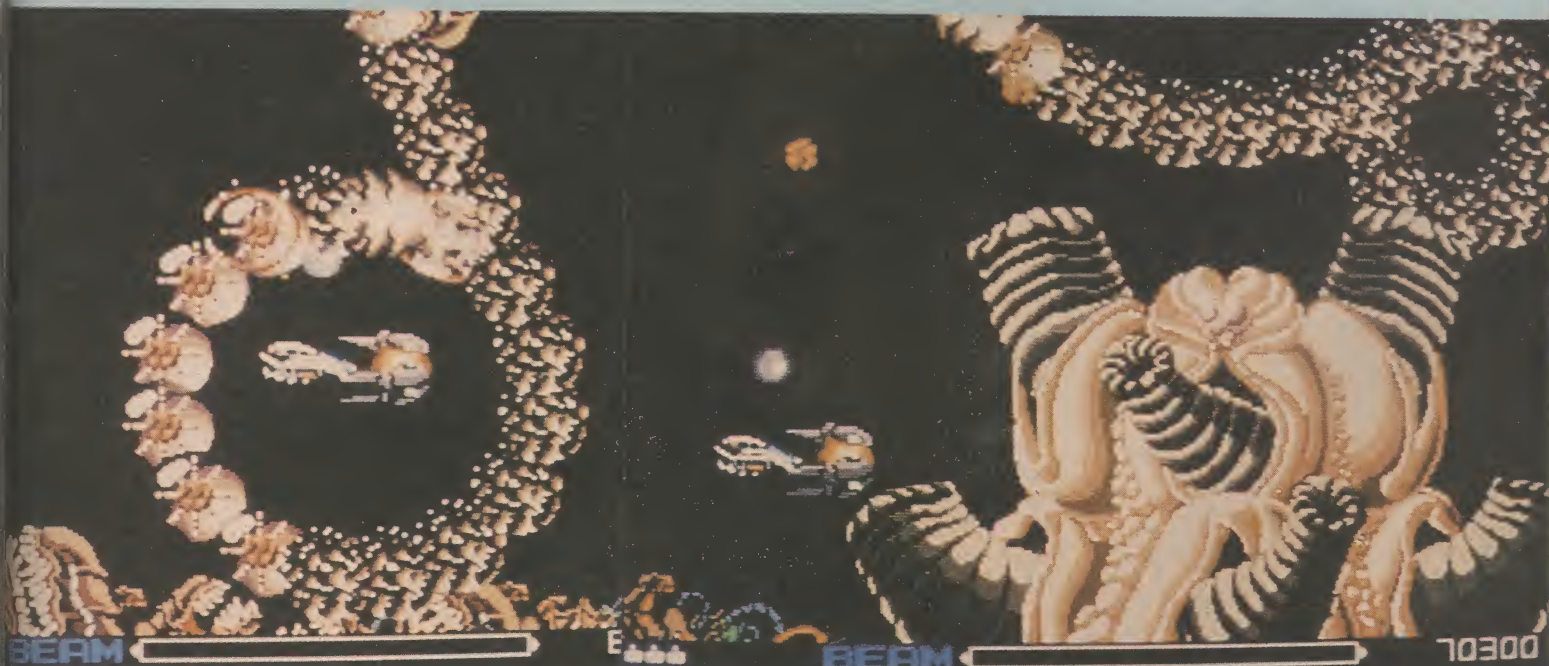


A strip of scrolling action from R-Type – fly through the flak, centre your R-9 assault craft in the centre of the worm and blast it, kill worm number two by shooting out its orange lights, and pump everything you've got into the seething mass of kidneys at the end of level two. Phew – what a game.



R-TYPE COMPO

2
R-TYPE
COUPON NO
2



R-Type is the master blaster conversion of the year. Spectrum, ST, and C64 versions received the thumbs up in last month's issue.

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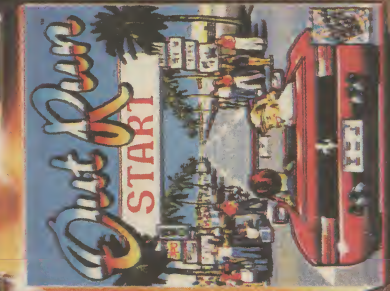
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Screen shots from various formats.

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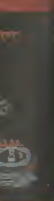
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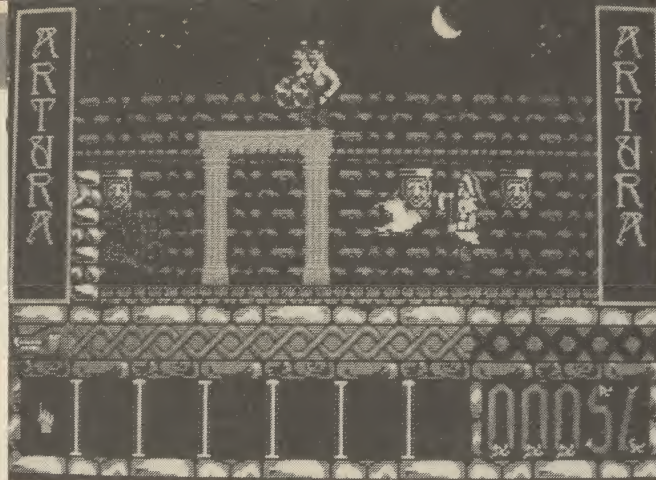
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Alpha House, 10 Carver Street,
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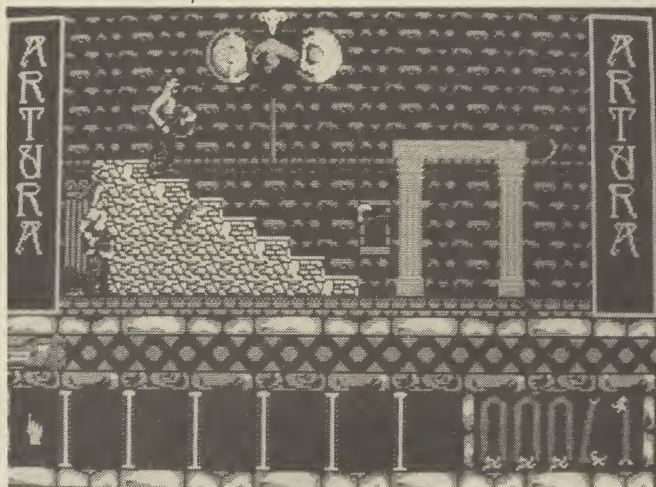
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Reviews

ARTURA



▲ Artura fails to impress.



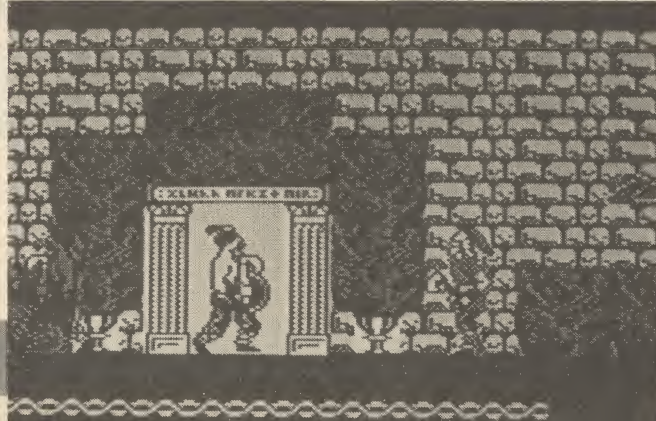
▲ Can this really be an ST game.

backgrounds like Captain Pugwash characters.

These 'classics' usually involved searching for the lost sword of someone-or-other and fighting to the death against hordes of beasts from the dark side... get the picture? What this bijou history lesson is leading to is that Gremlin has for some reason decided to resurrect the genre – probably so that 16-bit games players can be introduced to the 'joys' that these games bring.

Artura starts with the usual sub-Arthurian legend gibberish. You are Artura, son of Pendragon and half-brother to the vil Morgause. This witch has kidnapped Nimue, apprentice to the wizard Merdyn... etc, etc. This bunk could easily have been avoided by then use

▼ Not one of Gremlin's best.



► **MACHINES:** ATARI ST/C64/SPECTRUM/AMSTRAD.
► **SUPPLIER:** GREMLIN.
► **PRICE:** ST £19.99, SPECTRUM £7.99, C64 £9.99.
► **VERSION TESTED:** ATARI ST.
► **REVIEWER:** CIARÁN BRENNAN.

"Look back through the dark mirror of the seasons to the time when the Eagles deserted this land of Albion to the ravaging of the Saxons. Look back to an age of bloody war and mysterious magickes." And while you're at it, why not take a look back to about three years ago to a time when Boots was filled with Spectrum games that involved semi-mythical characters floating around dungeonesque

of one sentence: find the lost Rune stones and rescue the girl.

The blurb also describes Artura as an 'arcade adventure', but I'm loath to use this term as neither word is really applicable. Basically the idea is to explore a multi-roomed castle, consisting of left to right scrolling walls with doors in both the background and foreground allowing access both onto 'into' and 'out of' the screen.

Along the way there are opponents to be mangled, giant rats and falcons to be disposed of, food to be eaten and sections of Rune stones to be collected ('these stones will be the rune of me' – form the Kenneth Williams school of awful puns). An enery bar below the play area diminishes every time Artura comes into contact with a nasty of any

description – and guess what happens when this bar runs out?

Attack is always the best form of defence, and in Artura's case a never-ending supply of axes is used to deal with the opposition. Rats and the like can be seen off with a single swipe, but it takes a Castlemaine (that's four axes to you mate) to get rid of the rest of the opposition.

When a Rune is completed, play can then be switched into 'Rune mode'. This involves placing a pointer finger icon on the completed Rune and then stepping back in amazement as the 'Wheel of Cerriddwen' transports you to another plane – phew!

Try as I might, I couldn't find anything about Artura to recommend. The graphics are awful, the gameplay is seriously dated, the levels are too similar, the landscape is too confusing and no spark of interest is generated at any point.

This next little piece may sound like it should be shouted out from speaker's corner on a Sunday afternoon, but I really believe the software publishers shouldn't release games like this. Computer hardware has developed in leaps and bounds over the last two years – and as a sort of knock-on effect 8-bit games have improved beyond recognition in the same time. To my mind there's no excuse whatsoever for taking what is already a sub-standard 8-bit game and converting it upwards.

I'm going to have one last try at thinking of something nice to say about Artura... erm, the cover artwork's nice.

► GRAPHICS	3
► SOUND	5
► PLAYABILITY	4
► VALUE	2
► OVERALL	17%

Reviews

MUNCHER

► **MACHINES:** SPECTRUM/C64.
 ► **SUPPLIER:** GREMLIN GRAPHICS.
 ► **PRICE:** SPEC CASS £7.99, C64 CASS £9.99, SPEC DISK £12.99, C64 DISK £14.99.
 ► **VERSION TESTED:** C64.
 ► **REVIEWER:** JULIAN RIGNALL.

Have you seen the Chewits ad? You know, the one with an angry green monster who's running amok in a cardboard version of London? Just when he's about to sink his fangs into a famous landmark, he suddenly spies a Chewit, pops it into his cavernous cake-hole and finds his ravenous appetite suddenly satiated. Well, Beam Software, in conjunction with Gremlin Graphics, has decided to base a game around this whacky ad, and have managed to persuade Chewits to endorse it.

Rather than tackle the subject head-on and cast the player as a Chewit, those devious Beam people have decided on an alternative approach and have put the player firmly into the size 237 boots of the Godzilla-like monster!

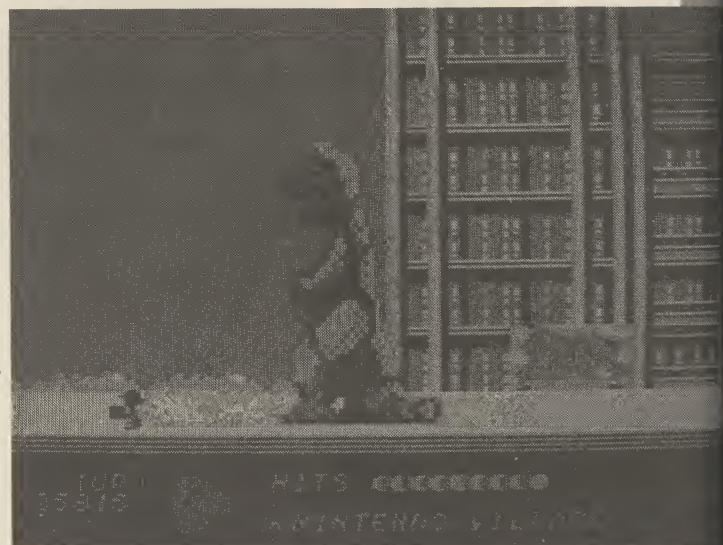
The mission of mayhem begins at the sea shore. Soldiers immediately start walking from both sides of the screen, and shoot at

the monster, knocking a chunk off his energy bar with every hit. However, these weak and puny humans are no match for the monster, who can leap on them, splattering them into horrible smears on the road. If he's feeling peckish, he can bend down, pick them up and eat them. Yum! And this frolicsome exercise adds a bit of energy to the bar! Innocent bystanders in the form of briefcase-carrying city nerds and pram-pushing women also run around in terror, and are similarly blatted or noshed.

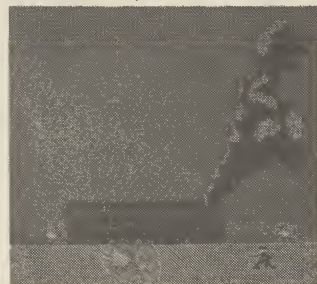
Soon reinforcements

play with. The third level, the army base, has even more soldiers and vehicles. However, at the end is a big brown monster who fights with fireballs, feet and claws.

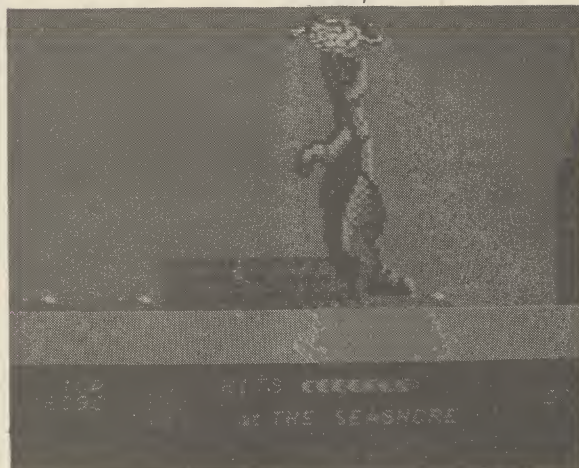
As you might have already gathered, *Muncher* is a game with a sense of humour. I thoroughly enjoyed playing it, and many a smile was in evidence as I bashed, smashed and chomped my way through the enemy forces. If you are a highscore fiend, the game throws down quite a challenge, and should keep large-scale vandals happy for some time.



▲ Chasing some lunch.



▲ Stomp!



▲ Leap and chomp a chopper.

arrive, with tanks, jeeps and helicopters firing missiles and ruining the monster's fun — but he leaps and snaps at the choppers with this great choppers, and jumps on the vehicles in a display of wanton destruction. The monster can also spit fire.

Buildings are encountered frequently, and can be bashed with the monster's tail, or climbed and thumped, *Rampage*-style. If he's feeling particularly tough he can climb to the rooftops of a particularly high building and roar derision at the piffling humans below.

When the end of the first level is reached, the action switches to Nintendo village (ahem, you're going to change that aren't you Gremlin?), which offers more of the same gratuitous violence, only with more things to

The graphics and sound are both fine, and even though the novelty will eventually wear off, there's plenty of fun in store.

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	7
► VALUE	6
► PLAYABILITY	8
► OVERALL	77%

UPDATE...

The Spectrum version looks even better than the Commodore, with slightly faster gameplay and more impressive sprites.

Gremlin say that there may be an ST version next year, although couldn't confirm that as definite. Let's hope so — improved graphics and sampled sounds mixed with the 8-bit gameplay could produce an incredibly good game!

STARGLIDER 2

Wah!



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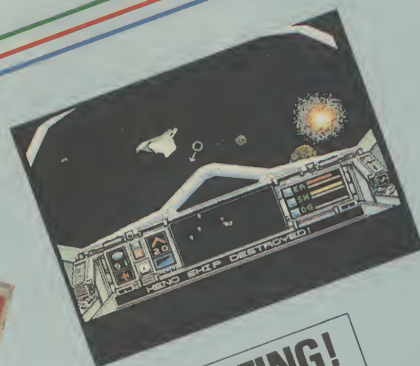
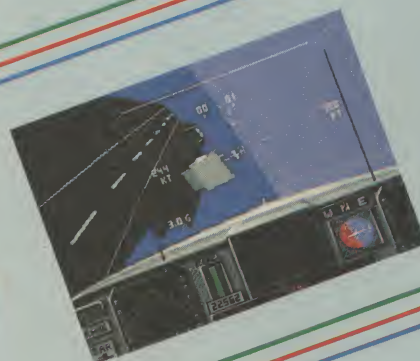
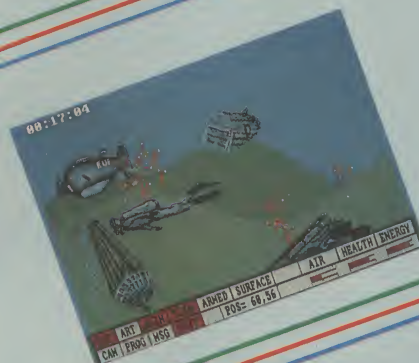
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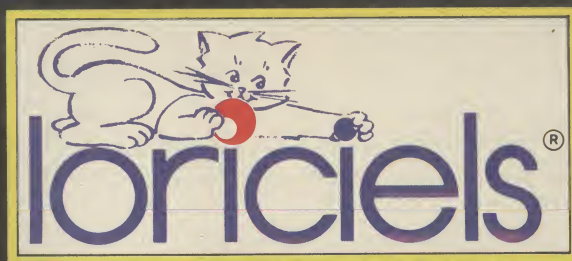
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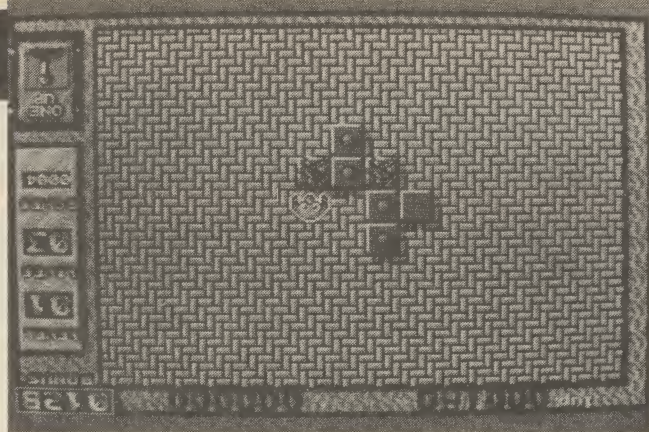
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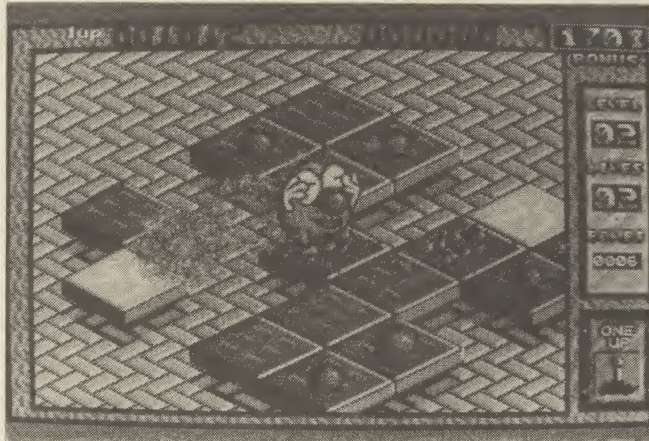
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► **SUPPLIER:** IMAGE WORKS.
► **PRICE:** SPEC CASS £8.95,
C64
CASS £9.95, ST/AMIGA £24.95.
► **VERSION TESTED:** ATARI ST.
► **REVIEWER:** CIARÁN
BRENNAN.

Ever since the first computer programmer made light move around a screen, there's been a race to find a new concept that's 'more difficult and absorbing than chess'. Image Works, *Bombuzal* doesn't aspire to this lofty ideal but it does come across as being a combination of Chess, Play-Doh and one of those Chinese number puzzles.

Like most difficult puzzle games it's based on a very simple idea. The only objective is to move a



▲ An aerial view of the action.



▲ Bomb blasting bombuzal.

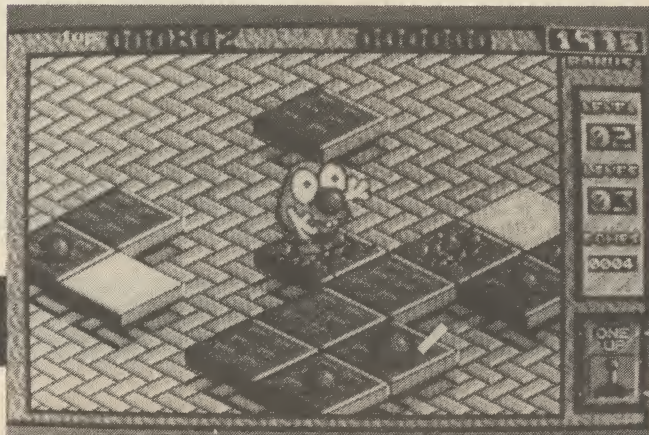
wobbly monster around a series of tiled sections, exploding bombs by stepping on them and staying in one piece in the process – but bombs setting each other off in chain reactions and tiles disappearing under your feet make this a sight more difficult than it first appears.

Each screen is made of up a number of different types of tile, and you can bet your life that you'll be in deep trouble if you don't watch where you're stepping. Normal tiles are safe enough, but the Dissolver does just that after you've stepped over it and the Ice Tile is a little too slippery and should be avoided. Other hazards include the Teleport tile which whisks you to a random square and the Spinner type which knocks you in any direction. A few tiles, such as the Temple (which absorbs explosions), the

▼ The 3D game.

bomb-moving Slot, the indestructible Rivetted tile and the map-resetting Switch can be used to your advantage, but don't depend on them showing up too often.

The bombs also come in many shapes and sizes – each type has a different effect which almost always has to be taken into account if a screen is going to be completed. Small bombs only destroy the square that they occupy, while medium and large bombs destroy four and 12 surrounding squares respectively. Then there are three varieties of aerial bomb, which explode when any other aerial bomb is detonated and cause exactly the same amount of damage as their 'normal' counterparts. Swell bombs change size randomly and mines detonate on contact... phew! There's not a lot of time to stop and admire the scenery in this



Reviews

environment.

To make matters worse you don't even have any privacy in this odd little world. A couple of other characters knock around on later levels and if you think that they're there to help you out then think again. 'Bubble' treats all bombs as mines (and you can imagine the trouble which that causes), while 'Squeak' is capable of doing anything that you can and does his level best to get in the way.

As if all this wasn't difficult enough, the exasperatingly precise joystick/mouse control adds to the difficulty and the supposedly helpful 3D option only causes more problems than it solves. So who can you blame all of this infuriation on? Well, the programming was done by The Bitmap Brothers, but they were aided and abetted by a number of famous screen designers including Andrew Braybrook, Jeff Minter, Ubik and Jon Ritman, so you take your pick from that lot.

This is more of a mindbender than a thumb-twister because once you've solved a level once it shouldn't prove to be a problem anymore. If you were the type who enjoyed showing how you could solve Rubik's cube in a fraction of a second then this is just the brain-teaser you've been waiting for – if not, prepare to lose a lot of sleep and a lot of hair.

► GRAPHICS	7
► SOUND	8
► PLAYABILITY	7
► VALUE	6
► OVERALL	74%

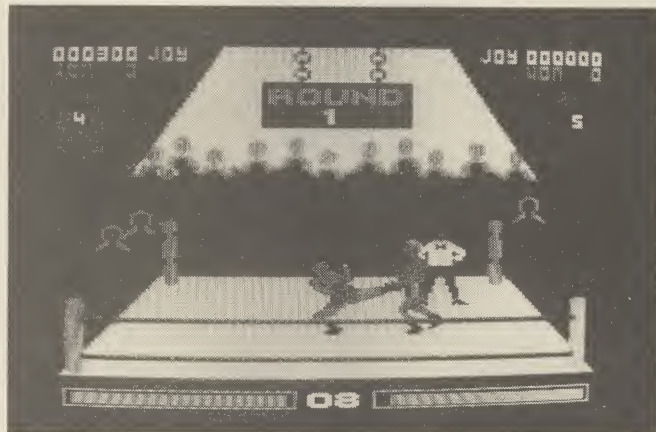
UPDATE...

All versions will play identically. Spectrum is monochrome, the C64 and Amstrad are more colourful. The Amiga version is identical to the ST bar slightly improved sound.

Reviews

BY FAIR MEANS OR FOUL

▼ No knockout game this.



- MACHINES: 64, AMS, SPEC.
- SUPPLIER: SUPERIOR SOFTWARE.
- PRICE: TO FOLLOW.
- VERSION TESTED: AMSTRAD.
- REVIEWER: TONY DILLON.

Talk about hitting the bandwagon fast. First Linel Switzerland announce its boxing game, *The Champ*, then Nintendo leaps in with *Mike Tyson's Punch Out* and now Superior Software release its soon-to-be-forgotten *By Fair Means or Foul*.

The reason for the slightly strange title is that this isn't a normal boxing game, where every man is a British fighter and everyone is clean and angelic. In this game, you play dirty if you want to get anywhere.

The game is viewed side-on, so's that your boxers on screen are square on with each other, only able to move forward and back, as in games like Barry McGuigan's *Boxing* thingee and *Fight Night*. A referee wanders about aimlessly, and to win properly, you've got to keep your eye on him as well as your opponent.

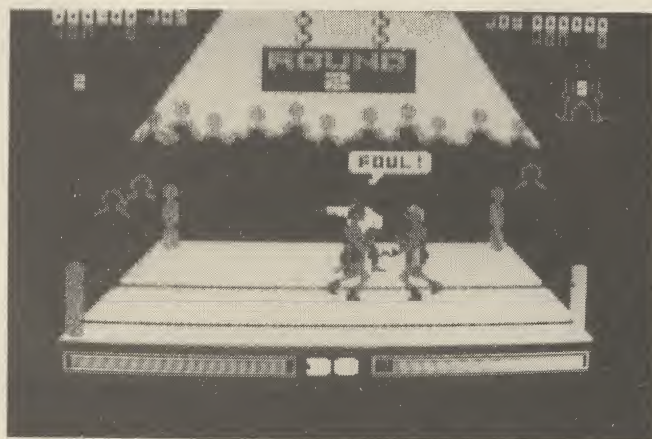
Like most people, the referee has a tendency to get bored very quickly. This is the key to winning. Fight like a gentleman when

as fast as it goes up, it drops twice as fast. These boys heal quickly!

You are very limited in the moves that you have to choose from. Basically a punch to the face, a punch to the paunch, a head butt (dirty move) and a kick below the belt (another dirty move). Needless to say, the dirty moves do the most damage.

It's with this in mind that I don't like this game very much. I found I was far too restricted for a boxing game.

Graphics are simplistic and blocky, with sparse



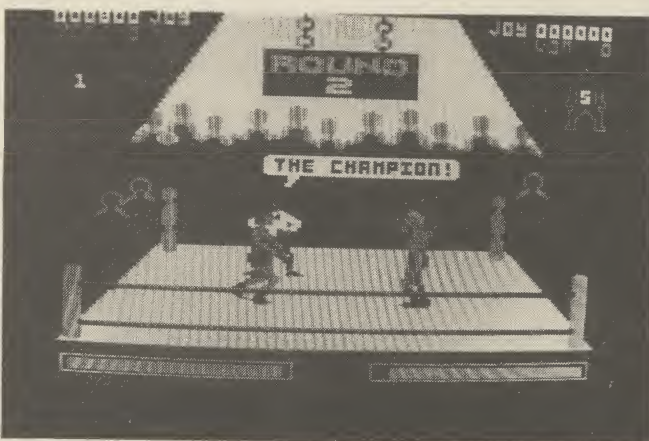
▲ Fight dirty when the ref isn't looking.

he's watching, but as soon as he turns away, play dirty.

He doesn't look away for very long, though, so timing is all important. Go for a dirty move, and he calls foul, losing you one of your five lives. The only other way you can lose a life is if you are knocked out, but that only seems to be possible after about 30 continuous hits with no interruptions.

As you hit your opponent, and indeed as he hits you, a damage-meter at the bottom of the screen slowly fills. The idea is to hit him hard enough to knock it up before he can recover. For

use of colour. At some points, the graphics are



▲ Dillon sits this one out.

almost unrecognisable. Especially so when the Ref gets bored. His head deflates and collapses on his shoulder.

Sound is as sound does on an Amstrad. i.e. it sounds like it's coming from the other side of a very tight wire mesh whilst you are wearing a greased cucumber in your right ear and a copy of the *Financial Times*, rolled up and smeared with Sainsbury's own brand Lemonade in your left. (Tony, what have you been up to? — Ed). In other words, lots of crackly scratching sounds coming from the 'crowd' and an occasional bonk from a punch or ping from a bell.

By Fair Means or Foul just isn't mv cup of tea.

► GRAPHICS	3
► SOUND	4
► VALUE	3
► PLAYABILITY	2
► OVERALL	36%

UPDATE...

The 64 and Spectrum versions should all be available as you read this, but let's be honest, who cares? The only difference between the Spectrum and Amstrad versions is the colour and the only difference between the 64 and Amstrad versions, is the resolution.

One not to look for, me thinks.

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Reviews

STAR GOOSE

- MACHINES: ST, AMIGA, IBM PC, AND POSSIBLY C64.
- SUPPLIER: LOGOTRON.
- PRICE: ST/AMIGA £19.95, PC £24.95.
- VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST.
- REVIEWER: MATT BIELBY.

The first thing you have to say about *Star Goose* is that it does look gorgeous. You may not think the sprite design is very imaginative, you may find the game play gets repetitive as you encounter your fifth near identical level, and you may think some of the controls verge on the ludicrous, but you have to admit that it looks very nice. *Star Goose* is a nice idea for a vertically scrolling shoot 'em up. Well executed, but marred by a lack of visual variety and a few silly mistakes.

You may say, and quite rightly, that the idea of a vertically scrolling shoot 'em up doesn't sound very interesting anyway, but *Star Goose* does give the idea quite a nice little twist. Despite its looks, the goose is not a space ship at all, but a land-wagon of some sort, and as such travels up and down over the bas-relief terrain. This means that your guns are only of any use in taking out the hostile ground installations and enemy craft you encounter when they are directly in the line of sight of your pitching craft.

Your weaponry consists of normal forward facing guns – which are not the most powerful thing ever and need to be trained on most enemies for quite some time before taking effect – and a limited supply of guided rockets. Unfortunately, these are not controlled by the joystick trigger, but by the

Alternate and Caps Lock keys on the ST itself, and as such are all but useless should you – like me – be in the habit of sitting back with your feet up to play the game.

Extra ammunition can be gained by entering tunnels of varying length through

heavy blue gates that appear periodically on the landscape: here you see your ship from a different angle – almost directly rear – as you scoot down a tunnel that looks like nothing so much as a spider web, picking up tokens shaped like

▼ Nice spiders web.



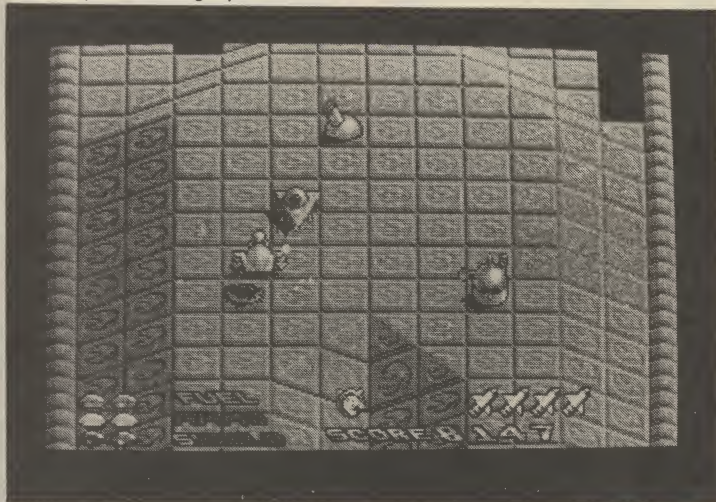
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BY MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS

OSE

▼ Sit up and look graphics.



gross eyeballs. Swing your ship from side to side and you can increase speed to a point where it is possible to circle right up one side of the tunnel and down the other.

There are other tunnels to help with shield and fuel supplies.

To progress onto the next level you have to collect six brightly coloured jewels from the landscape, which could seem to be quite a problem since your ship will slow down but never stop, and by the time one appears on the screen it

could be too late to swing right across and collect it. It's okay though, because each level wraps around on itself, and so before long you'll be back in a position to pick it up again.

Quite why anyone would ever bother going onto the second level, however, is

almost as much of a mystery. The mountain shapes and occasional deadly "lakes" may be different, and there may be a few more baddies to take on, but the overall look is identical. I have to admit a fondness for the metallic valleys and hills of the landscape, and in particular the way the whole mood can change as they face randomly from one colourway to another.

Though there are more sprites in the later levels at any one time, and each is perfectly clean drawn, if rather small, there is not a single one I could describe with any degree of accuracy 24 hours after having played the game.

The same could be said of the rather uninspired music and sound effects. We have, then, a game with the potential to have joined the list of really good 16 bit shoot 'em ups – your *Sidewinders* and your *Xenons* – but which botches the job through repetition and possibly the most annoying piece of ill thought out game design I have encountered this month. If I ever again have

to reach over to the Caps Lock key, risking taking my eyes off the screen for a couple of seconds, only to see my precious rocket roar uselessly off the top of the screen, it's target having moved... it will be too soon. File under "honourable attempt, doesn't quite cut it".

► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	6
► VALUE	7
► PLAYABILITY	7
► OVERALL	72%

UPDATE...

The Amiga version, released exactly the same time as the ST, looks and plays nigh identically. There is also a PC version scheduled for November though we haven't seen that, and quite serious talk of a C64 variant appearing before the New Year, though that is also not definitive.

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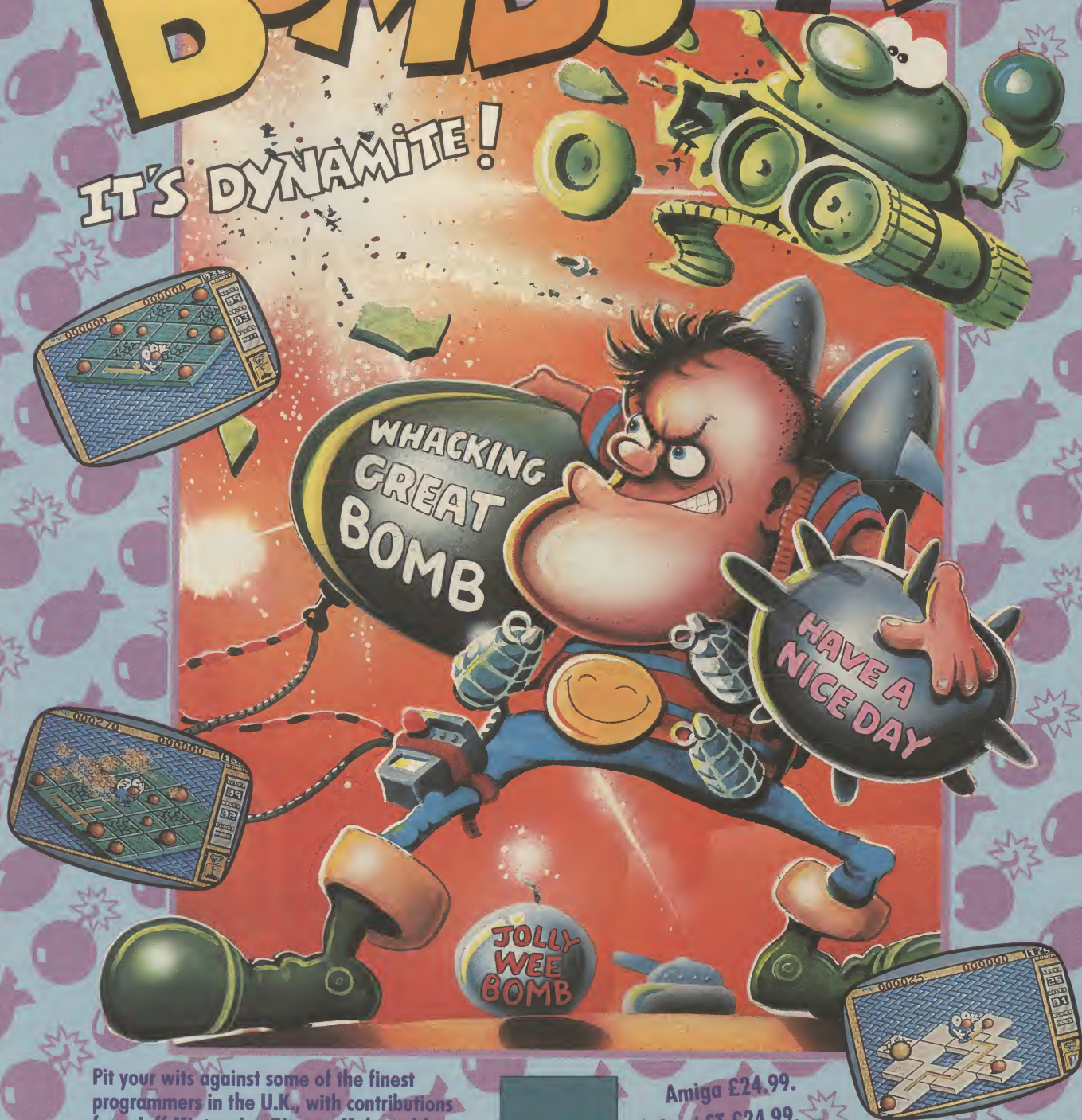
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DOUBLE DRAGON

► **MACHINES:** SPECTRUM, C64, ST, AMIGA, PC.
 ► **SUPPLIER:** MELBOURNE HOUSE.
 ► **PRICE:** C64, SPEC £9.99, ST, AMIGA £19.99, PC £24.99.
 ► **VERSION TESTED:** ST.
 ► **REVIEWER:** TONY DILLON.

This is the third version of DD that I've seen today, and I can't deny that I am becoming just a little bored with it. The problem is that all the versions I've seen so far, and that

includes this one, are all far too easy. Still, on with the review.

Double Dragon – unofficial sequel to the well crucial beat-'em-up, *Renegade*, has you, and a friend if you so wish, in a dazzlingly violent rescue scenario, all for the love of your sweetheart, kidnapped by the infamous Mr Big. The bit I can't understand, is why can't the two chums involved realise that the girlie is two-timing them with each other.

The game itself is basically a right to left scroller much in the mould of *Renegade*, *Vigilante* etc, with a bit of up and down scrolling, just to give you a bit of elbow room.

Enemies come in the form of your average everyday street punks and

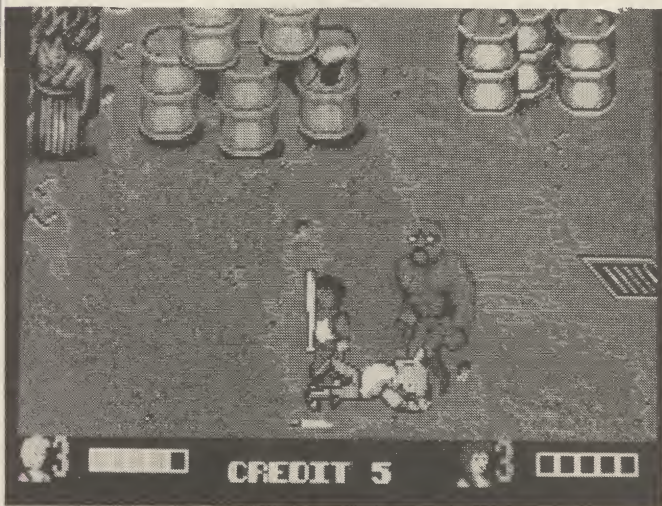
punkesses who emerge from all manner of places (nearby rooftops, doorways, from hidden niches in shrubbery etc) and have the basic mission of causing as much physical damage to you as possible.

To do this, each fights in their own specific way. Some merely try and wade in with punches, some attack from a distance and flying kick you to the ground. You get some really unfair fighters that gang up and attack from all directions at once. If you're really unlucky, a group of about six or seven will just stand around you and keep punching you to the ground every time you get up until you lose a life.

You can fight back with a variety of moves ranging from the simple punches and stomach kicks, to some really dirty back elbows to anyone standing behind you, and I do mean anyone. You can beat up your partner, which unfortunately you find yourself doing quite a lot as you launch yourself into a crowd of enemies.

That isn't all of the combat. There is one more thing to tell you about. Weapons. Some enemies emerge into the game with baseball bats, whips, packing crates, barrels, rocks, . . . You name it, they've got it. Of course, it goes without saying that most of these items do a lot more damage than your regular punch or kick. Thankfully, you too can use these items. If you're a real cleverdick, you can position yourself just as they come onto screen, and knock the weapon out of their hands before they can use it.

Where these weapons come in handiest is against the really big enemies. Twice the size of the ordinary enemy, these huge giants break through



Reviews

DOUBLE DRAGON

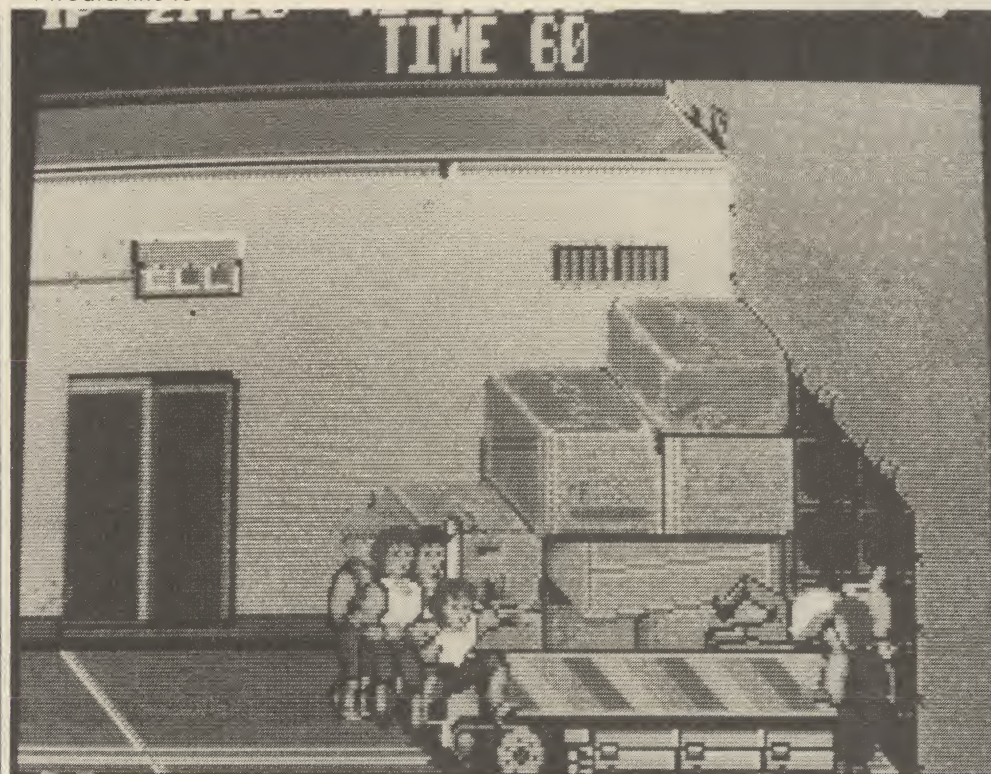
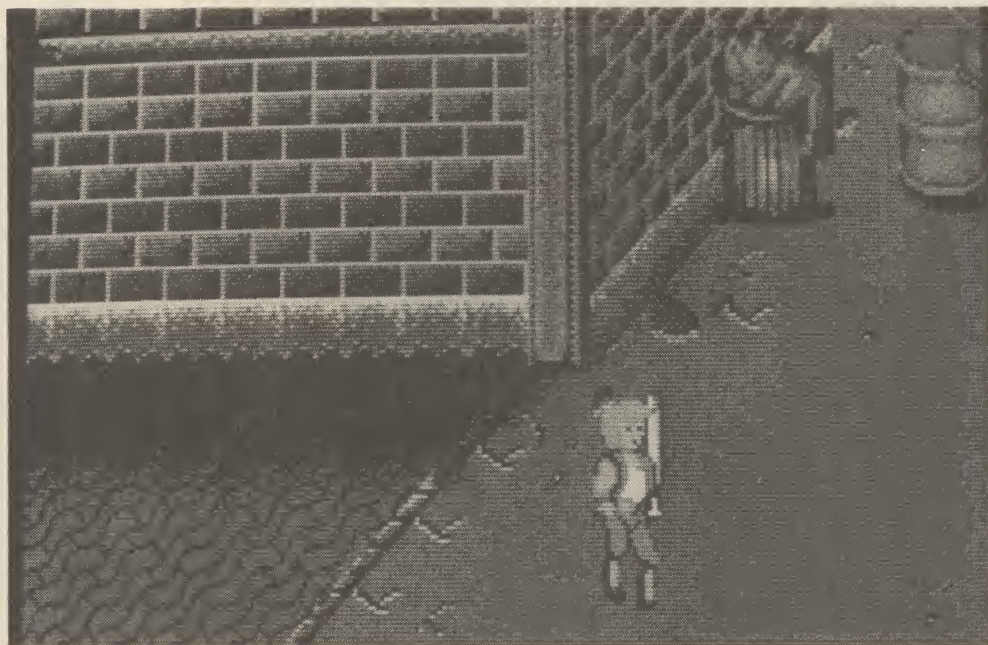
the walls that line some streets, growl menacingly, and then smash you to the ground. Sounds a little difficult to me.

Unfortunately it isn't. In fact it's amazingly easy. You can earn an extra life in almost no time whatsoever, and it's thanks to the fact that I completed the game on my first go and technically lost no lives.

Speaking of the sound, which we weren't, it's hilarious. All the regular thumps and bops are there, as well as two really unusual death noises. When the women die, they make a short 'eek' sound. When the men cop it, they make a sound not unlike the sound made by someone throwing up violently. Har har.

Graphics aren't too good. They're not terrible, but there's something about them that says "look at me. I'm not very well designed or animated. Aren't I comical." At least they're fast.

I would like to



recommend Double Dragon, because when it comes down to it, it is quite fun. But I can't because it's just far too easy to be worth it, and for a coin-op conversion opportunity of this 'cult' appeal it is not quite there.

▶ GRAPHICS	5
▶ SOUND:	5
▶ VALUE:	3
▶ PLAYABILITY:	6
▶ OVERALL:	54%

UPDATE . . .

All other formats are being released at the same time and all feature the same style of gameplay. Multi load could may well be a problem on the smaller machines, especially with tape loading times. There are no 8-bit disk versions definitely planned, but they are being looked at, as is an Amstrad CPC version.

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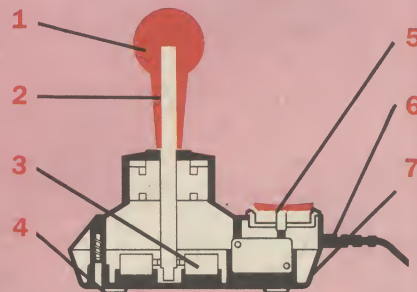
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► **MACHINES:** SPECTRUM/AMSTRAD/C64/ATARI ST/AMIGA/MSX/PC.
 ► **SUPPLIER:** ACTIVISION.
 ► **PRICE:** SPEC/C64/AMS/MSX £9.99 CASS C64/AMS £12.99 DISK, ST £19.99, AMIGA £24.99.
 ► **VERSION TESTED:** SPECTRUM.
 ► **REVIEWER:** JULIAN RIGNALL.

Arguably the hottest arcade game of the year, Sega's *Afterburner* has finally arrived on home computer format courtesy of Activision.

The unenviable task of converting this monster machine was given to Keith Berkhill, whose previous masterpieces include *Ghosts 'n' Goblins*, *Space Harrier* and *Commando*. Has he been able to work magic and reproduce *Afterburner* on the Spectrum? Well, the answer is a resounding yes – believe it or not.

For the arcade virgins among us, *Afterburner* is an aerial combat game in which the player flies an F-14 against an entire enemy airforce. The action

is viewed in 3D from behind the plane, rather like a traditional race game. Formations of enemy craft fly over the horizon and attack before peeling away. Sometimes planes emerge from the sides of the screen, swooping across the F-14's flightpath, and attack from behind, requiring some nifty manoeuvring to shake off the pursuer.

The solo mission of death and destruction starts on an aircraft carrier. The F-14 takes off automatically and heads for the sky, and from then on you're on your own.

The plane is armed with an unlimited supply of bullets, which fire constantly throughout the mission, and a limited amount of air-to-air missiles. When an enemy plane comes into firing range, a box appears around it and a missile can be launched by pressing the fire button to send it haring across the sky to home in on the target. Bullets are a good means

of bringing down planes that fly in front of the F-14, but otherwise they're pretty useless in combat.

The first few formations of planes are merely cannon fodder, but the jets that follow launch missiles at the F-14; one hit is fatal and the plane plunges to the ground and ploughs a great furrow as it comes to a standstill. As the player progresses the missiles become faster, more numerous and very accurate, and swift reflexes and good hand-to-eye co-ordination is needed to fly the plane safely through the seemingly unceasing assault.

Occasionally a plane or homing missile approaches from behind with the sole intent of destroying the plane. This frantic situation prompts only one course of action; a spin. This particular manoeuvre is tricky to master, but essential if the player is to complete the mission. A short tug of the joystick in one direction, followed by a quick switch



▲ Banking steeply on the Speccy.



▲ Speccy has the right opening sequence sends the plane – and the horizon – into a complete rotation, shaking off the aggressor in the process.

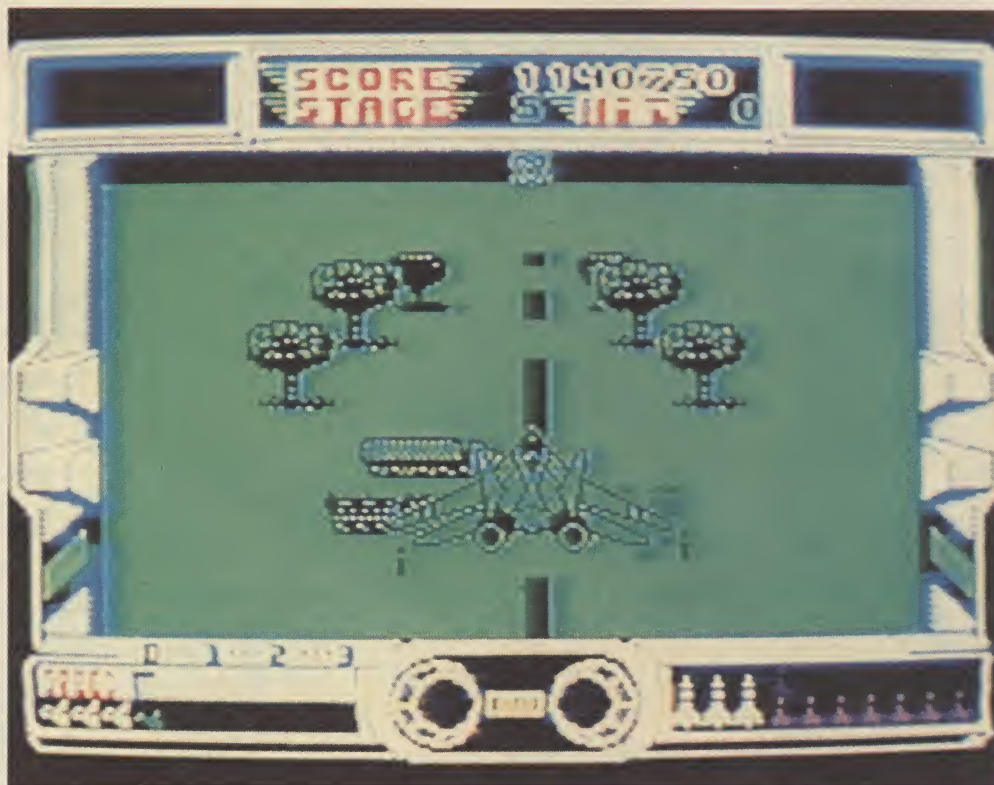
At regular intervals a big tanker plane flies in and the F-14 automatically docks in mid-air for refuelling and rearming.

There are 23 levels in all – like the arcade game – the majority of which involve aerial combat. There are two canyon runs, where the plane is guided down the middle of a steep-sided valley to strafe ground targets that litter the plain. The sides of the

Near perfect title screen on the 64.



BURNER



▲ Swoop down to take out ground targets.

it takes off – it's good to see that sort of attention to detail.

The original arcade game had lavish and very fast graphics. Unfortunately the colour is lost on the Spectrum – the playing screen is always a combination of two colours to avoid attribute problems – but the speed has been retained, and the game is as fast as its coin-op big brother.

The main sprite is clearly drawn and the 3D update on the enemy planes is smooth. There are few ground features, the majority of them seem to be bushes, but you tend not to notice when you're flying – there are far more important things happening on-screen to spend time gawping at that scenery. The canyon section is well executed, and again the update is convincing.

More importantly, the game is extremely

playable. The plane handles beautifully, and targetting and firing missiles is easy. My one single gripe is that it's sometimes difficult to see incoming missiles due to the colour restrictions – but it doesn't ruin the game. Play is exciting, and the frenetic action keeps you on your toes constantly – the only time you can ever afford to relax is when the plane is on the runway!

The difficulty level is set quite high, and even though the game is started with a generous number of lives, it doesn't take long to blow up all the planes. Nevertheless, this small fact didn't stop me playing it incessantly!

Afterburner, is an excellent conversion, and while Keith Berkhill goes for a stroll on water, Spectrum owners at least can revel in one of the fastest and most impressive arcade games to appear in the six-year history of the

machine!

And now that Activision has proved the seemingly impossible, the ball is now in US Gold's court. Will *Thunderblade* shoot down *Afterburner*? Or will *Afterburner* leave *Thunderblade* in its jet wash? One thing's for sure: *Thunderblade* will have to be exceptional to beat this.

▶ GRAPHICS	9
▶ SOUND	7
▶ VALUE	8
▶ PLAYABILITY	9
▶ OVERALL	90%

UPDATE . . .

The 16-bit versions are being programmed by Argonaut Software, producers of *Starglider I and II*. Hopefully their usual high standards will be in evidence in their first arcade conversion.

Afterburner on the C64 & Amstrad should be as fast as the Spectrum, and have more colours.

canyon have to be avoided, so it's useful to slow the plane down as much as possible – that way there's more time to pick the juiciest targets and notch up as many points as possible.

There are also two friendly airfields to land on, where the plane is quickly serviced before resuming combat; it provides a very welcome breather from the frenetic action. The programmer has included the little *Hang-On* bike and *Outrun* car which follow the plane up the runway as

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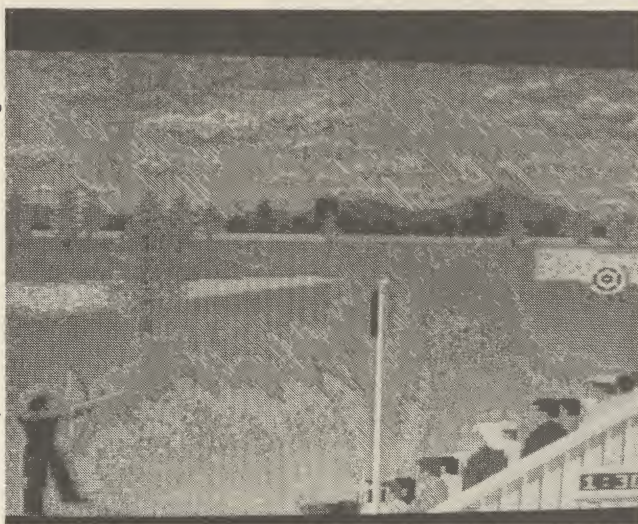
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- VERSION TESTED: C64.
- REVIEWER: TONY DILLON.

TGSE, or rather, *Summer Games III* falls well into the reputation of the seemingly endless Games series that started all that time ago with *Summer Games*. By that I mean great graphics, terrific sound, stacks of playability and horrendous multiloading.

The whole point behind the Games series is that they give all the same old twaddle, but dress it up so you think you're getting something new. And to be honest, they've done a fine job at dressing this one up.

What you get are right events, all portrayed in a



▲ Looks great but the ease of play spoils the game.

about one second in every twenty that's the exact moment to let go of the hammer, you usually find yourself completely mistiming it.

Parallel bars bars. Move toward the box, the

Reviews

Archery. My fave. Waggle the joystick to build up the stress on the bow, then line up the sight on the target, making sure to compensate for the wind shown by the windsock.

As usual, the game is multiloading, and as this isn't much of a problem as far as disk owners are concerned, cassette owners are in for a nightmare. Most events take around three and a half minutes to load. That's a long time considering that most of the events don't take that long.

I quite like *TGSE*, but there is, as always, a fault or two. With this, the fun is

THE GAMES SUMMER EDITION

new and interesting way. They are:

Diving. More than a little similar to the original *Summer Games* event, except that now it boasts much fancier graphics and is a lot easier. The idea is to make your man jump off the springy bit off wood/fibreglass and land in a large puddle in the nicest possible way.

Velodrome cycling. This is the event in which the two cyclists get chained to razor thin cycles and have to race headlong around the inside of a bowl. The graphics are done as first person 3D view, from slightly behind the cyclist. The 3D update is relatively smooth and very fast, giving a good overall impression of movement. Unfortunately, as before, the event is far too easy.

Hammer throwing. A good joystick waggler, this one, with some pretty amazing graphics. Waggle your stick to get the ball swinging, press fire, and then keep on wagging to get the man swinging and then press fire to let go. As there is only

the joystick in random movements left and right to get your athlete to do some pretty amazing things and rack up some pretty high scores. Yet another nice and easy event.

Rings. Waggle the joystick in either of the two directions to send your man up and down on the old chest muscle rippers. Yet another one of those events where you don't know what you're doing,

▲ Good presentation, nice graphics, but you've seen it all before.

'camera' is positioned at the end of the pole, so you can look down and see his furrowed brow as he wonders whenever the pole will snap as it did to our own Daley Thompson. Once in range of the jump the view goes back to the old side on bit. Another remarkably easy event. Hurdles. The normal bit. Waggle the joystick left and right to run faster and fire to jump.

incredibly short lived, due to the quickness and relative easiness of the events. That, plus the loading times, aren't enough to keep anyone playing past their bedtime.

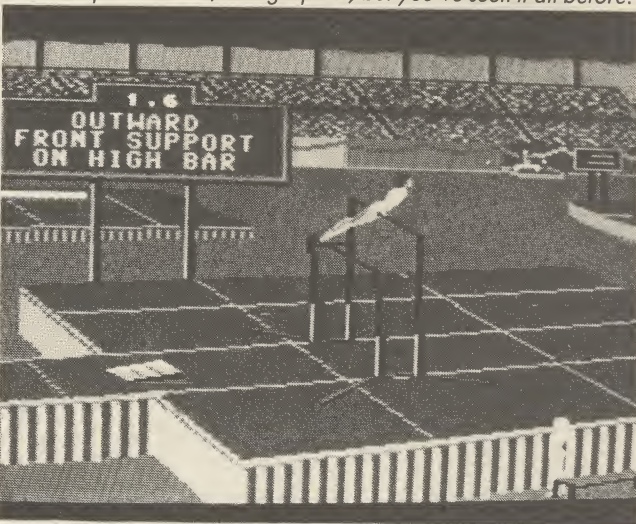
► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	7
► VALUE	6
► PLAYABILITY	4
► OVERALL	70%

UPDATE ...

The PC version is pretty similar to the 64 version, with only a couple of slight colour and sound differences. Also, instead of running the 110m hurdles, you run the 400m hurdles. Strange.

Spectrum and Amstrad versions are being worked on and will be released soon.

Amiga and ST versions will definitely happen and will be even more fabbo than *Californian Games*, but don't hold your breath. They won't happen until well into '89.



HELLFIRE

ATTACK

- **MACHINES:** SPECTRUM, C64, AMSTRAD, AMIGA, ATARI ST.
- **SUPPLIER:** MARTECH.
- **PRICE:** SPEC £8.99/£14.99, C64, £9.99/£14.99, AMS £9.99/£14.99, ST/AMIGA £19.99.
- **VERSION TESTED:** ATARI ST.
- **REVIEWER:** MATT BIELBY.

Martech's *Hellfire Attack* is a scrolling shoot 'em up not... ah, 100% unlike certain other high profile shoot 'em ups you will be seeing and reading about in the run up to Christmas.

You play the pilot of a Supercobra attack helicopter flying against wave after wave of enemy fighters jets, choppers and missiles. The scrolling isn't perfect, with many of these jumping towards you in a steady series of jerks rather than getting progressively larger, but since even such games as *Victory Run* on the PC Engine suffer from the same fault, it is forgivable.

Whoever played designer on this game must have visited some pretty strange places, however, as the first two levels consist of a bizarre combination of woods, castles and Manchester-style terraced suburbia, with level three showing a rather radical interpretation of what we would normally think of as oil rigs. In other words, none of the backdrops resemble anything that could be confused with reality, and thus far from being an "arcade simulation" of an attack chopper it occupies the strange limbo between the world as we know it and pure fantasy. No attempt is made to suggest why we should spend ten minutes shooting up Coronation Street before being whisked immediately into a frozen polar seascape, and so the obvious inference is that they have had trouble trying to interpret the complex sprite movements this sort



▲ Hilda Ogden's place goes up in smoke.

of game requires onto even a 16 bit machine, and so have let the "concept" of the thing go to pot.

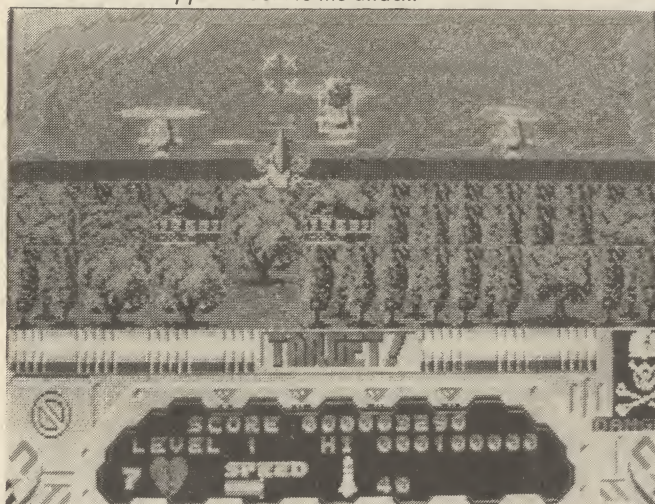
"Heads Up!" reads the legend as your 'copter rises into the air at the start of Level One, the rotors making a harsh whir and the gun sight hovering a few inches above you. The guns fire automatically the moment you are airborne, and with rearmament stops between the level there is no danger of running out of ammo. Your joystick buttons allow you to fire extra rockets, and the space bar on the computer gives you turbo boost with a decidedly unhandy flick of the heel. Honestly, this would have been far better incorporated into the joystick with a double click or something – no one wants to have to take their

eyes off the screen and one hand off the stick.

And whatever its other faults, there is no way you could fairly accuse this game of being slow. Waves of 'copters rush towards you, and while in the early levels it isn't too hard to avoid them by skirting around the edges of the screen, you can't count on this technique for long. With a homing missile nearly always right on your tail, it is impossible to use the centre of the screen for fear of it connecting. This can force you into a corner and... Whammo! It would take some hot shot flying to stay in one piece against the whole barrage of attackers.

Hellfire Attack isn't too bad a game – I enjoyed some of the backgrounds and the frenetic action was sort of fun.

▼ Missiles & choppers zoom to the attack.



► GRAPHICS	5
► SOUND	6
► VALUE	6
► PLAYABILITY	6
► OVERALL	56%

UPDATE...

Hellfire Attack should be released on all formats at once, and though at the time of writing we haven't seen finished 8 bit versions we heartily recommend you look before you buy (in other words, they may not be too hot).

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SDI

- **MACHINES:** SPECTRUM/C64/ST.
- **SUPPLIER:** ACTIVISION.
- **PRICE:** C64/SPEC £9.99 CASS, C64 DISK £14.99, ST £19.99
- **VERSION TESTED:** ST.
- **REVIEWER:** JULIAN RIGNALL.

Some great fool has pressed THE button and started World War III. Who started it? Nobody knows, but hallaluhah, the missiles are flying and the only thing standing between them and the obliteration of the entire Western hemisphere is you and your SDI satellite. Yes, that whacky little Star Wars defence system that cost a mere 59 zillion dollars and was fully endorsed by everyone's favourite cowboy President, grinning Ronnie Raygun is about to have it's first test run – and its curtains if you fail to do your duty in this latest Sega coin-op conversion.

The first scene is set in space, with mother Earth forming a part of the horizontally scrolling backdrop. The player's

satellite is dropped off by a friendly space shuttle, and the action begins. The aim is to shoot down all hostile missiles and satellites by blasting them with your laser, which is aimed with a mouse-controlled cursor in similar fashion to Atari's ancient *Missile Command*. For some reasons which will remain nameless – let's call it game designer's licence – the lasers don't strike their target instantly, but take a split second to get there, sometimes

allowing the target to slip by before the lasers impact. Therefore, for faster moving targets it's often wise to shoot just in front of them to ensure their destruction.

The satellite can also be moved, either by trundling the mouse while the left hand button is depressed, or using a joystick in the other part in conjunction with the mouse giving a similar feel to the arcade game, with its joystick and trackball. Although this sounds a little tricky, the latter control method is excellent – more that can be said for mouse only, which is very sluggish in practice and tends to cause frustration when the satellite won't move quickly enough. The reason for satellite movement is that if an enemy space vehicle hits it, a life is lost and the level is restarted from scratch.

▼ Don't let those nukes slip past you.



▲ Defence mode is engaged – as the nukes fly.

Occasionally a friendly satellite appears which drops a power pod when blasted. When this is picked up, an extra feature is added to your craft; a yellow pod gives extra firepower, a red one gives multiple cursors (up to three) and blue pods give extra speed when moving the satellite.

Each level lasts for a specific period of time, and if every enemy missile and satellite is blasted, a 20,000 point 'perfect' bonus is awarded, and the player goes on to tackle the next level. If some missiles get through the defence, indicated by a damage meter at the bottom of the playing area, the player has to endure a 'defensive' level.

▼ The world turned upside down.





▲ A rare game that is better to play with a mouse.

At the bottom of the screen is the Earth, oblivious to the clusters of missiles winging their way over the horizon. These are shot with lasers before they fall to earth and wreak immeasurable damage. Any missiles that sneak through add even more to the damage meter, which results in a loss of life if it is totally filled. When the assault is over, the percentage of targets shot down is displayed, and converted to points before the second level begins.

This is played over a different backdrop, and although fundamentally similar to the previous level, has faster and more aggressive enemy forces. There are twelve levels in all, each offering an

increasing level of difficulty.

A neat feature is the playable highscore table, which apparently leads to a cheat level if you can complete it. Scores are automatically saved for posterity – a presentation point I applaud.

At grass roots, *SDI* is a *Missile Command* variant, although enough has been added to make it a thoroughly addictive game. Reactions are tested to their limits as swarms of enemy craft and salvos of missiles fly around the screen. I particularly like the joystick/mouse control option, which keeps the gameplay at a frantic level as you co-ordinate both hands to inflict as much

damage as possible, yet stay out of harm's reach.

The graphics are colourful and detailed, and the horizontal scrolling is surprisingly smooth. A parallax starfield is also used to get good effect.

The backgrounds are nicely detailed, and in the midst of the action, the colourful explosions look as though a firework display is taking place!

There's a different tune on each level – some are rather mellow and melodious, quite a feat for the usually tinny ST sound chip. The sampled loading music is also good, although it's a little scratchy in places.

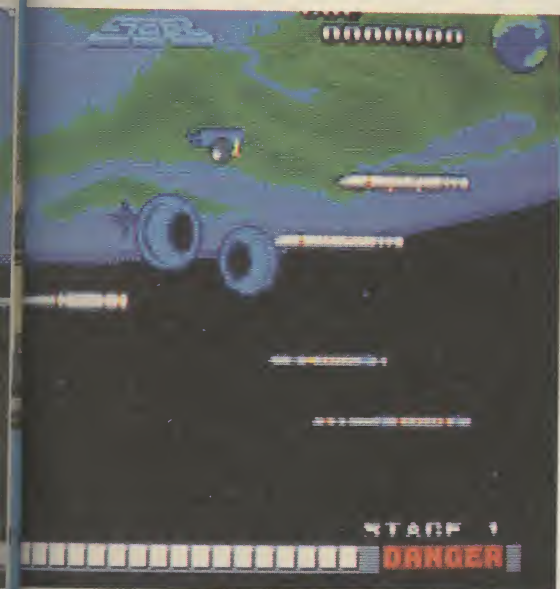
SDI is a very simplistic game, but that's where its

appeal lies – you can load it any time, put your brain in neutral and blast away until your heart's content. Take the initiative and try it out.

▶ GRAPHICS	8
▶ SOUND	8
▶ VALUE	6
▶ PLAYABILITY	8
▶ OVERALL	81%

UPDATE ...

Both the Spectrum and Commodore versions will be available shortly. They're both looking good, although how the games will play without the mouse/joystick option is another matter entirely. Our advice is to test them out first.



crazy cars II



AMIGA
ATARI ST
PC
AMSTRAD CPC
SPECTRUM
C 64/128



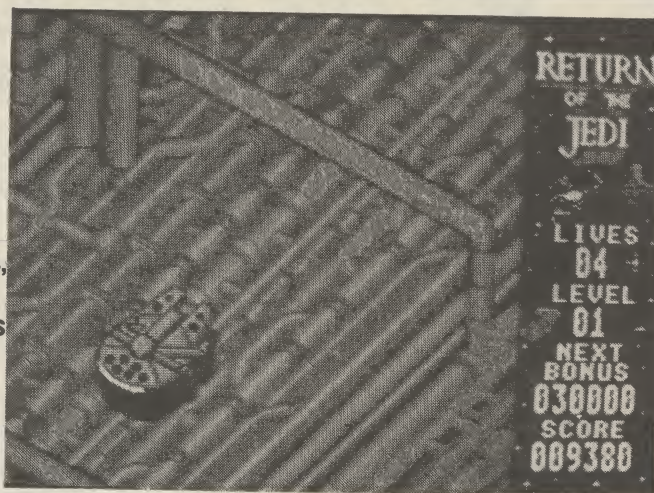
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Reviews

- MACHINES: ST, AMIGA, C64, SPECTRUM, AMSTRAD.
- SUPPLIER: DOMARK.
- PRICE: SPEC/AMS/C64 CASS £9.95, C64 DISK £12.95, SPEC/AMS DISK £14.95, ST/AMIGA £19.95.
- VERSION TESTED: ATARI ST.
- REVIEWER: CIARAN BRENNAN.

A long time ago in a galaxy far away, a



▲ Scrolling through the grids on the ST.

attempts to avoid or destroy oncoming logs and boulders. During waves two and three a 'split wave' effect comes into operation, with the action switching at crucial points from the forest to the Death Star where Lando Calrissian is taking the Millennium Falcon on a do or die mission to destroy the central reactor.

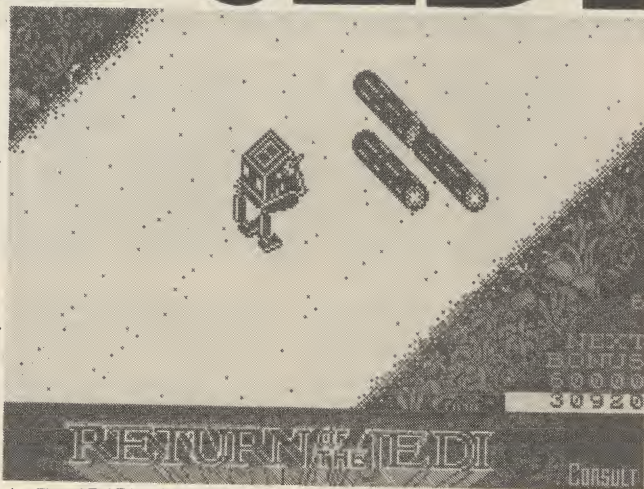
Lando also has to battle along a diagonally scrolling landscape, with Imperial fighters in hot pursuit and dangerous protrusions jutting from every wall. The action gets a touch hectic at this point, as you have to keep a close eye both in front of

RETURN OF THE JEDI

powerful regime known as the Atari Corporation produced a series of massive coin-op games – *Star Wars*, *The Empire Strikes Back* and *Return Of The Jedi*. Meanwhile, in far off Wimbledon, a small, revolutionary outfit, Domark, managed to infiltrate the Atari HQ and escape with the home computer licences for these games. Over the past year Domark has successfully converted the first two – but now can it pull off its third and most difficult mission, making a good job of *Return Of The Jedi*, and thus makes the universe a safer place?

The first section takes place in the forest of Endor, where you (as the Princess Leia – no sexism here buddies) race along a diagonally scrolling pathway on a high-tech speederbike avoiding the copious forestry and keeping your eyes peeled for the Imperial Stormtroopers who wait behind the trees like evil speed cops.

The scrolling is super smooth and the sprites and backdrop are good enough, but this section is



▲ The AT-AT tackles snowy Speccy terrain.

let down by a couple of little faults. First of all the joystick control is sloppy, making controlling the speederbike into a little too fine an art for my liking, and second the action scrolls by at a fixed speed – pushing forward rushes the player towards the top of the screen, but once there the action returns to its normal pace. But for all that this is a compulsive enough task, finishing only when Princess Leia reaches the Ewoks' base camp to be greeted by an ecstatic R2D2 and C3PO.

At this point your body changes dramatically. You grow by about three feet and develop a nasty bodily hair problem – that's right you're Chewbacca the Wookie! Things aren't going too well for old Chewie, as he's at the controls of an Imperial Scout Walker and attempting to take it to a bunker to relieve a pretty desperate Han Solo.

Once again the background scrolls diagonally (although this time it's from bottom right to top left) as Chewie

▲ Into luxuriant forests on the ST.

the Falcon for obstacles and behind for the enemy.

It's difficult to decide whether *Jedi* is a good finish to the *Star Wars* series or some kind of space turkey.

The presentation is up to Domark's usual high standards, with a choice of three difficulty levels, demo mode, high score table etc.

Return of the Jedi is probably not as good a game as either of its predecessors, but it is a good conversion and an adequate game in its own right.

	ST	SPEC
► GRAPHICS	7	8
► SOUND	7	8
► PLAYABILITY	7	8
► VALUE	6	6
► OVERALL	67%	72%

UPDATE...

All versions with play similarly to each other. Amiga will have speech and better graphics.

Reviews

GAME OVER

- **MACHINES:** SPECTRUM, AMSTRAD, C64, ST, PC.
- **SUPPLIER:** DINAMIC (E.A.).
- **PRICES:** SPEC/C64/AM CASS £8.99, DISK £12.99; ST/PC £19.95.
- **VERSIONS TESTED:** AMSTRAD/ST.
- **REVIEWER:** MATT BIELBY.

First things first: there is no way you can argue that *Game Over II* isn't good value. There is a lot of game here for the money, from outer space shoot 'em ups through *R-type* style tunnels to *Rastan*-like beating and blasting – almost as much as one of those budget compilations. With winter setting in, you need something to fill the evenings.

The 8 bit versions come with the first one on the flip

side. Add this to the free poster – featuring some of the most attractive but least relevant box artwork we've seen for a while – and you've got quite an attractive little package for your Amstrad or 64.

The game comes in two loads, the first of which you have to complete before you gain the access code for the second (and no, I'm not going to tell you what they are). Let's go through the levels in order, shall we?

After the nice title screen, we're straight into the action with a bang as we approach the enemy prison planet. Two sorts of aliens approach – those that fire back at you and those that swirl around the screen – as well as a number of asteroids.

Unfortunately, your ship will insist on drifting back to the left of the screen at every opportunity – leaving your very



▲ *Game Over II* – we wish it was.

vulnerable to incomings from the left – and shouts of "That came nowhere near me!" could be heard to echo around the office. If your ship was more manoeuvrable, everything

a little less jerky and the collision detection less rosey, it would be a very playable little Amstrad game.

It's down the tunnels and into the planet next, for a –

- **MACHINES:** C64, ST, AMIGA, PC.
 - **SUPPLIER:** EPYX.
 - **PRICE:** £19.95, 64 £14.95, 16 BITS.
 - **VERSION TESTED:** AMIGA.
 - **REVIEWER:** TONY DILLON.
- I can quite happily say that *Final Assault* is, without a shadow of a doubt, the greatest, graphically best, most exciting and most realistic mountain climbing game ever. Probably because it is, as far as I can remember, the only one ever.

Before you can begin your ascent to the top, you have to make some vital decisions including the route you wish to climb. The route you choose greatly reflects what kind of a chance you're going to have to get to the top. If you choose an easy course, you are allowed to lose your footing three times before you die. Choose a hard one, and you only get one chance.

Still, on with the decisions. The next thing you have to bend your brain over is whether to take champagne or not, or a bobble hat, or climbing spikes, or anything. Yes, it's

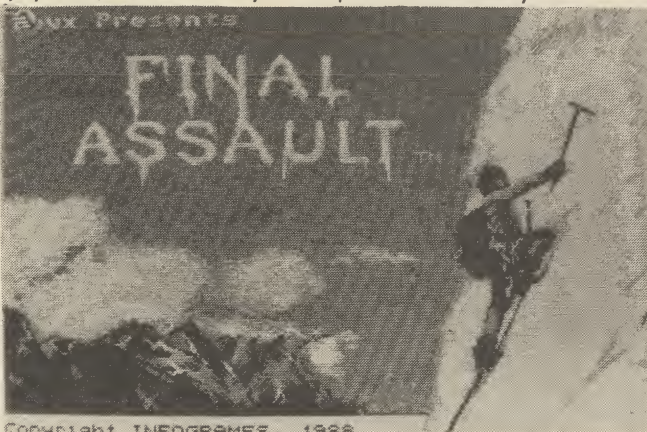
"What shall we put in our rucksacks" time. The most important things you should bring, apart from the obvious stuff like crampons, soft shoes, rope and a copy of C+VG, are things to warm you up, like clothing or drink (Rum, wine, hot chip fat etc). Once you've got yourself kitted up, it's onto the icy slopes you go.

Before you get there, you've got to walk along the gentle slopes. This is done by, and don't laugh, moving left/right on the joystick, occasionally

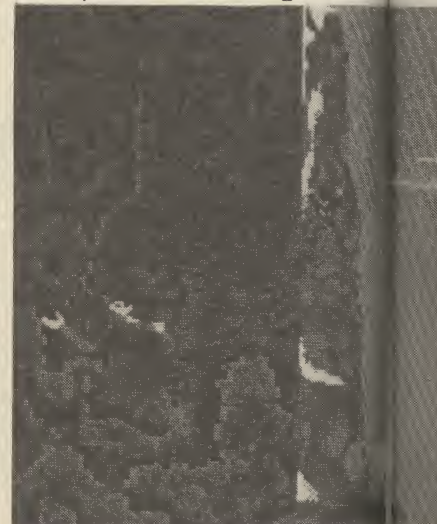
testing the ground by pressing down and jumping over cracks by pushing up. This is how the whole game is played. Rather than move the climber as a whole, you have to move individual parts of his body.

So, you've got to your first bit of vertical rock. What now? You can climb it by hammering in the old iron spikes and hauling

FINAL



▲ Nice title screen – shame about the game.

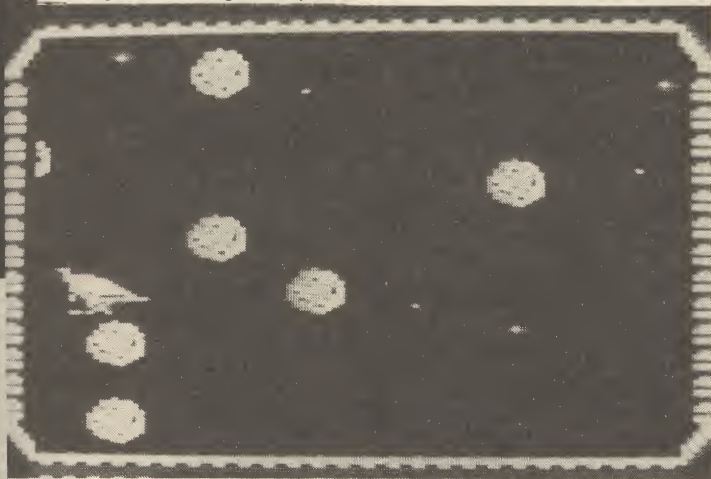


▲ Surely someone can do a better climbing

ER II

thankfully short – three minutes of the worst *R-Type* clone ever seen. This hardly bears writing about, except to say that on the Amstrad the snakes die very easily, and you should be able to get through without losing a life, while the ST features the world's worst collision detection.

▼ *Doge those Ginger Snaps.*



Woe betide you if you dare venture anywhere near the top of the screen!

The last section of this load has you step out of your space ship and mount a space-ostrich thingy. Armed with a "photonic" blade which looks like a giant yo-yo on the Amstrad, you slash your way through a swampful of giant frogs and pterodactyl riders. Come out the other side and it's the end of load time, just in time for a cup of tea and a sticky bun.

Throughout Load Two you play a jet pack equipped little chappy, armed with a variety of weapons as the phases go on. There are six stages, the first of which involves using your jet pack to keep above the action as much as possible, while you roll a tame ball shaped creature into hostile members of the same species. As you enter the alien base there are a variety of bad guys to cope with, including men on living, biting Space Hoppers and floating monstrosities which materialise in front of you.

By now you should have picked up a gun as you make your way through the maze of tunnels, eventually coming into a wooded area where the key to a blue door lurks. There are plenty of extra lives hidden around here, so you can afford to die a few times and still continue the game. Through the door lurks a monster filled lake, a section where you must use a helicopter to avoid falling rock and leaping lava (decent of the aliens to leave a Jet ranger lying around) and the final level

where you get to free your friend from prison.

The whole thing is laughably bad on the ST – no wonder they haven't bothered with an Amiga version – but the 8 bit package is generous, and while it won't set the world alight, could be a wise purchase. Though C64 owners are – still – spoiled for choice, there is too little around on the Amstrad for this to be ignored.

None of the shoot 'em up styles that make up the various levels are good enough to stand up on their own, but together they make for a quite appealing package.

	AMSTRAD	ST
▶ GRAPHICS		2
▶ SOUND	5	2
▶ VALUE	8	3
▶ PLAYABILITY	6	4
▶ OVERALL	74%	21%

UPDATE . . .

All the versions mentioned at the top of the page are released simultaneously, but no Amiga is going to be available. Some surprise.

ASSAULT

yourself up. This is done by pushing up to hammer the spikes in, pulling down to move the climber's legs, and then pushing up to

move the climber and get him to put in the next spike. It's wild, it's wacky, it's boring.

Finally you reach the real challenge, the vertical slope.

One of your climber's appendages flashes at a

time, and you have to move the joystick up or down to cycle through the various ways he can position it. Once happy that he's got it in place, press fire to move the next bit until you've got both arms and legs in the

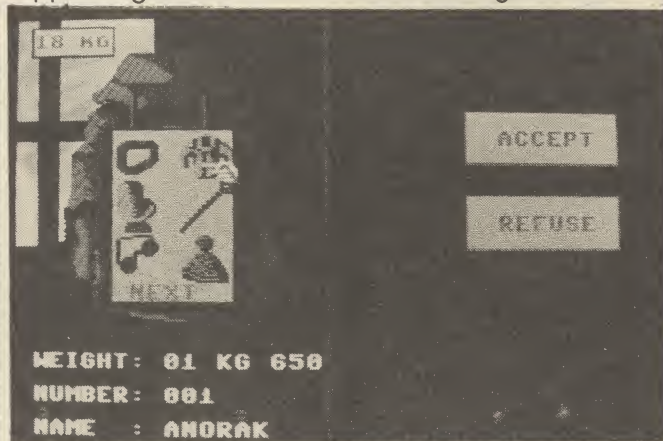
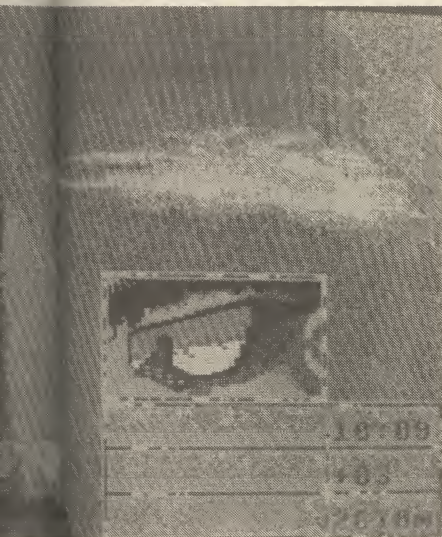
perfect position.

Final Assault isn't rubbish. In fact it's quite fun. It's nice to know that there is still some originality left in the market. The only problem is, it's far too easy. On my first go I played at intermediate level and finished it without any problems. With that problem in mind I have to give *Final Assault* the thumbs down.

	64	AMIGA
▶ GRAPHICS		6
▶ SOUND		5
▶ PLAYABILITY		5
▶ VALUE		5
▶ OVERALL		57%

UPDATE . . .

The ST version of *Final Assault* has identical graphics to the Amiga, though, as is the case with nearly all ST games, doesn't have nearly as good sound. The PC version, funnily enough, also boasts the same well-detailed visuals, with some attractive sound to boot.



▲ *Selecting your gear – where's the C+VG.*

ter climbing game than this.

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Reviews

► **MACHINES:** SPECTRUM, C64, AMSTRAD/AMIGA/ST.
 ► **SUPPLIER:** FIREBIRD.
 ► **PRICE:** SPEC £8.99 CASS, AMS/C64 £9.99 CASS, ST/AMIGA £19.99.
 ► **VERSION TESTED:** SPECTRUM. 64.
 ► **REVIEWER:** TONY DILLON.

If I was to walk up to you in the street and tell you that a Spectrum was capable of an almost arcade quality game with huge, colourful graphics and immense playability, what are the odds you'd have me locked away. That's why I'm not going to tell you in the street, I'm going to write it here. The Spectrum is capable of an arcade quality game. You still don't believe me? Then feast your eyes on *Savage*.

Savage is, if you didn't already know, the hottest game from Telecomsoft yet, who seem to be having a bit of a ball at the moment, what with *Carrier Command* and *StarGlider II*, and these still screenshots can't even begin to convey the wonderfulness of this game. It's the only game that makes a colour monitor worthwhile for the Spectrum. It's amazing!

Savage is a 6'4" blond haired, macho Danish programmer-type person,

whose girlfriend has been kidnapped. His job is to rescue her, through fire and ice, come hell or high water. *Savage's* woman has been woman-napped by some vicious fiend (probably) and so, as lovers do, he's set off to rescue her through three levels of glorious technicolour, non-clashing, brilliant, 100% pure arcade action.

The first features our hero, *Trantor*-like, in all his

SAVAGE



▲ Better do as the man says, macho glory, and what a stud he is. He even walks muscly. He make Eugene Lacey looks like Arnold Swarcheneef, er, swodgernagger, um, Sylvester Stallone. He has to run from left to right, hurling magic axes from his infinite magic axe supply at the attacking



▲ Hula that hoop.



▲ Things are a bit too quiet...



Savage, standing proud!

flies, spiders, and Ad Managers. Yes, even in a game as wonderful as this, our own Garry Williams makes an entrance as a huge, pot-bellied, lager swilling ad-selling demon, who bounces around hurling lightning bolts, which is only slightly different to what he

normally does. He bounces around hurling abuse. The graphics are huge, well animated, colourful, non-clashing and simply amazing. Definitely a must see.

Pass that lot and it's onto the second level, which is a 3D jaunt, Space Harrier-like, through a

Savage

1988. The 16 bit version promise some surprises as well from what I've heard – liked the digitised roar of our hero who shouts "Savage" every so often on the Amiga version.

Next it's onto the third and final level. The girl is hidden somewhere in a maze far too difficult for *Savage* to negotiate, so he sends his pet bird in. For most people, a pet bird is a budgie or a canary. For *Savage*, it's an eagle. What

can get squashed under a falling pole, he can get impaled on spikes, he can merely get his head bitten off and fall to the floor all portrayed in similarly gory ways.

Savage is definitely one of the best arcade games yet seen on the Spectrum. If you don't buy it, it's not worth your while having a Spectrum.

Savage could be the game that puts development house Probe well and truly on the map.

Congratulations are due all round.



▲ The Gene Simmons of the statue world.



▲ I wonder if it's friendly.

nightmare world of rotating head-shaped monoliths and totem poles that stick their tongues out rudely when they get close. As usual fast, colourful graphics abound, and the 3D movement works really well. Funnily enough, the programmer has quite

cleverly managed to get brown as one of the colours on the scrolling floor. Quite clever considering the Spectrum doesn't have brown as a base colour.

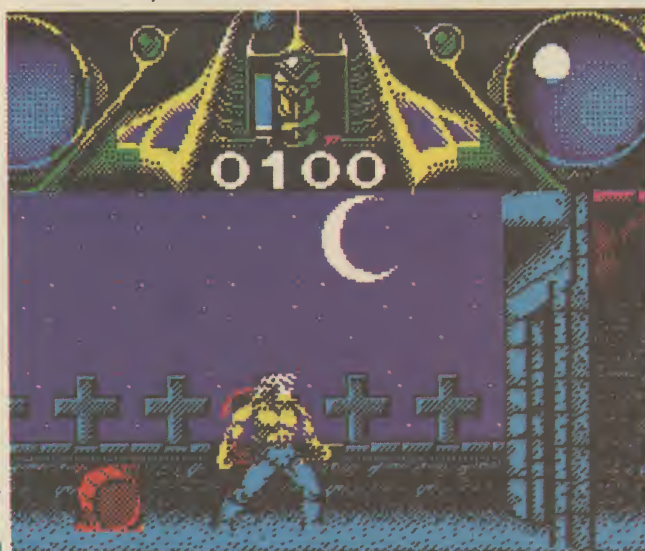
That is the beauty of *Savage* – it pushes the Spectrum even further than anyone believed it could be pushed right at the end of

you have to do on this level is fly the eagle around the maze until it finds the girl. Simple! The only difficulty is that the enemy normally have some sort of say in it, and it's this level that features the best of the graphics, the eagle's death. Yes, there is more than one way to die. He

	64	SPEC
▶ GRAPHICS	9	
▶ SOUND	7	
▶ PLAYABILITY	8	
▶ VALUE	8	
▶ OVERALL	78%	87%

UPDATE . . .

The Amstrad version looks and feels pretty similar to the Spectrum version, the only main difference being that there's considerably more blood when you die on the third level. The C64 version, funnily enough, is also looking pretty similar to the Spectrum version. How it plays remains to be seen. ST and Amiga versions will be available soon, boasting even better graphics, and an amazing soundtrack on the latter. Gameplay will be the same – but is three levels enough to justify the price tag?



▲ A nice view from the castle battlements.



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Amiga screenshot

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C64 & AMSTRAD CPC DISK £14.95
C64 Cassette £9.95; SPECTRUM,
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Screenshots taken from ATARI ST.

Screenshots taken from SPECTRUM

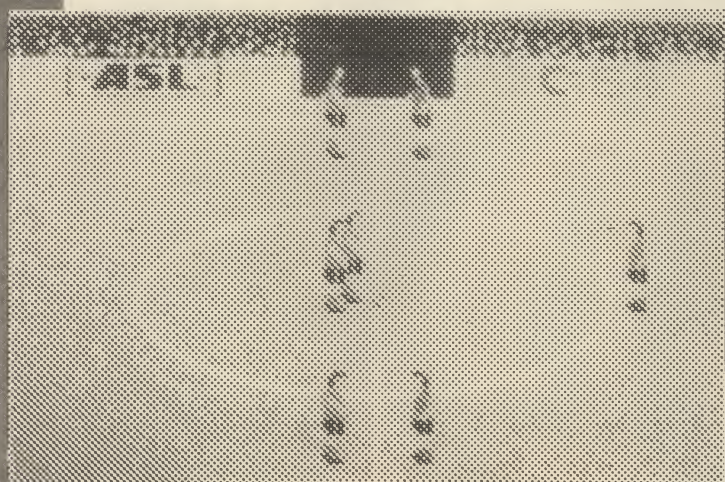
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Software Title	Spec	Spec	C64	C64	AMS	AMS	Software Title	Spec	Spec	C64	C64	AMS	AMS	Software Title	Spec	Spec	C64	C64	AMS	AMS	Software Title	Spec	Spec	C64	C64	AMS	AMS	Software Title	Spec	Spec	C64	C64	AMS	AMS
1943	7.25	D2	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	Mansells Racing	7.99	D3	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	1943	14.99	14.99	14.99	14.99	14.99	14.99	** Software **	14.99	14.99	14.99	14.99	14.99	Master System	7.99	7.99	7.99	7.99	7.99	7.99	
4 x 4 Racing	7.25	D2	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	Motor Massacre	6.50	D2	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	3D Wanderer	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Night Raider	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Master System Plus	9.95	9.95	9.95	9.95	9.95	9.95	
Action Service	6.30	D2	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	Monopoly	7.50	D2	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	5 Star Hits-ST	15.99	15.99	15.99	15.99	15.99	15.99	Operation Wolf	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Master Super Syst.1	29.95	29.95	29.95	29.95	29.95	29.95	
Adv Art Studio	15.99	D2	15.99	D6	15.99	D6	Night Raider	7.99	D2	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	Action Service	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Overlander	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Lighthouse + Cart	44.95	44.95	44.95	44.95	44.95	44.95	
After Burner	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Ocean Comp'n	8.99	D5	8.99	D5	8.99	D5	After Burner	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Overlord	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	3D Glasses	39.95	39.95	39.95	39.95	39.95	39.95	
Alien Syndrome	6.30	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Op Art Studio	8.99	D5	8.99	D5	8.99	D5	Artura	15.99	15.99	15.99	15.99	15.99	15.99	Pac-Mania	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Control Stick	14.95	14.95	14.95	14.95	14.95	14.95	
Airbourne Ranger	7.50	D3	9.99	D6	9.99	D6	Operation Wolf	6.30	D3	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Barbarian II	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Paper Boy	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Koniks Joystick	12.99	12.99	12.99	12.99	12.99	12.99	
Artist II - 48K	13.99	D2	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	Outrun	6.99	D2	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	Barbarian II	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Peter Beardsley	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Quickshot 15 J/SK	14.99	14.99	14.99	14.99	14.99	14.99	
Artist II - 43 Disk	15.99	D2	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	Overlander	5.50	D1	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Battle Chess	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Pool of Radiance	16.99	16.99	16.99	16.99	16.99	Alex Kidd 1 or 2	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	
Artura	6.50	D2	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	Pac-Mania	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Black Tiger	15.99	15.99	15.99	15.99	15.99	15.99	Power Drome	19.99	19.99	19.99	19.99	19.99	Alien Syndrome	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	
Barbarian II	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Packman	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Blazing Barrels	12.99	12.99	12.99	12.99	12.99	12.99	Puffys Saga	19.99	19.99	19.99	19.99	19.99	Aztec Adventure	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	
Bards Tale	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	Packman	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Butcher Hill	15.99	15.99	15.99	15.99	15.99	15.99	Question of Sports	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Blade Edge 3D	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	
Batman	6.35	D3	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Packman	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Capone	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	Rambo III	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Caplain Silver	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	
Battlefield Germany	8.99	D2	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	Packman	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Capone	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	Rambo III	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Double Dragon	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	
Ball Tiger	6.99	D2	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	Packman	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Capone	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	Rambo III	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Fantasy Zone II	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	
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Dandy	6.50	D2	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	Packman	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Capone	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	Rambo III	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Great Golf	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	
Dark Fusion	6.50	D2	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	Packman	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Capone	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	Rambo III	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Great Volleyball	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	
Dark Side	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Packman	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Capone	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	Rambo III	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Kensiden	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	
Double Dragon	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Packman	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Capone	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	Rambo III	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Lord of The Sword	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	
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Espionage	6.75	D1	9.99	D3	6.75	D1	Packman	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Capone	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	Rambo III	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Outrun	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	
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Fist + Throttle	8.99	D3	6.99	D3	6.99	D3	Packman	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Capone	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	Rambo III	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Phantasy Star	39.95	39.95	39.95	39.95	39.95	39.95	
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Football Director	6.99	D3	6.99	D3	6.99	D3	Packman	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Capone	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	Rambo III	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Rescue + Mission	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	
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F. Director 2	13.99	D6	13.99	D6	13.99	D6	Packman	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Capone	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	Rambo III	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Shinobi	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	24.95	
F. Manager II	6.99	D3	6.99	D3	6.99	D3	Packman	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Capone	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	Rambo III	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	Shooting Gallery	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	
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Gauntlet II	6.99	D2	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	Packman	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Capone	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	20.99	Rambo III	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	13.99	World Grand Prix	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	22.95	
Gauntlet II	6.99	D2	7.99	D4	7.99	D4	Packman	6.50	D2	7.25	D3	7.25	D3	Capone	20.99	20.99	20.99																	



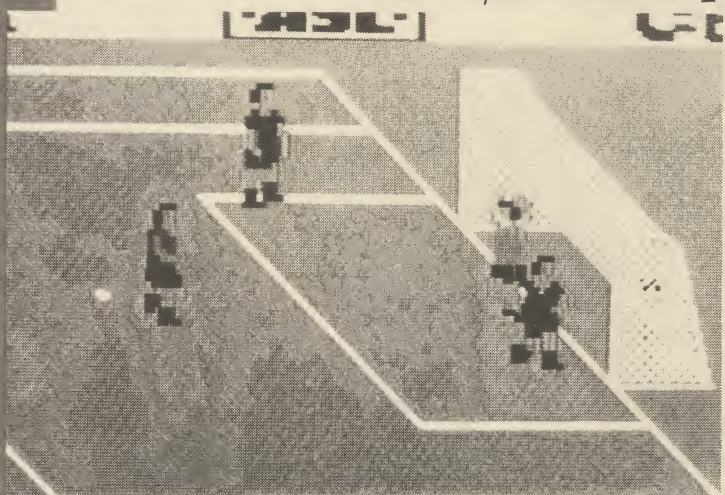
EMLYN HUGHES INTERNATIONAL



Ready for the kick off. ▲



... and he's past the defence ... ▲



... and it's in!!! ▲

- **MACHINES:** 64, SPEC, AMSTRAD CPC.
- **SUPPLIER:** AUDIOGENIC.
- **PRICE:** SPEC CASS, £9.95; C64 CASS, £9.95; DISC £12.95; AMS CASS £9.95; DISC £14.95.
- **VERSION TESTED:** 64.
- **REVIEWER:** TONY DILLON.

"Ooooooh! It's greeeeet! I know it, I know it! ... No, it's gone. You're me mate, you are. Eeeeeeh!". The unmistakable tones of your own Emlyn Hughes, sportsman, comedian, popular TV personality and all round rectum pain has been given his own game. Oh dear ...

Take a look around these two pages and match the screen shots to the next statement. *Emlyn Hughes International Soccer* is the best ever 64 arcade football, even better than the fab *Microsoccer*. The graphics are terrible, you may say. No they're not. The still graphics are less than wonderful, I know, but the animated graphics are unbelievable. The movement is just so smooth and fluid, it has to be seen to be believed. Though blocky, the graphics are amazingly clear, and at no time is there any doubt as to what a player is doing or in which direction he's going.

The best way I can describe *EHIS* is to say that Audiogenic has taken the style of graphics from *International Soccer*, made them much better, added myriads of extra frames of animation and new moves, blended in the league and cup bits from *Matchday 2*, put in a spot of *Tracksuit Manager* options here and there, and come up with quite an amazing product.

The first thing I will praise about this game is its amazing ease of use. Between matches, you are presented with a large blank 'workspace' and a bar at the top of the screen.

This is where all the work is done as far as setting up matches and basic game options is concerned.

Move a pointer to the bar, and four pull-down menu titles appear. Move the pointer over one of the titles and press fire. The menu then appears, and what a menu. On each of the four is a choice of at least 15 options. That's over 60 options in total, allowing you to change team names, players names and statistics (speed, attacking strength, defensive qualities), team colours, allow you to start a league or a cup tournament between eight teams, any or all of which can be under human control. On top of that you can choose to just save out a team or two, or save out all the game options, including team colours, current cup league status. In short, everything.

You get out onto the pitch after all the decision making, and your team runs out on pitch, alongside the opposition. Here is where the game gets special. As I've already stated, the graphics are amazing. Large and beautifully animated. The diving headers are terrific, and the goalkeeper diving and catching the ball is enough to have you on the edge of your seat.

The sound is pretty ace, too. A quiet crowd rumble goes on continuously in the background, building every time something important happens, like you take a shot at goal and miss. Persons with klaxons honk out the familiar "Honk-honk, honk-honk-honk, honk-honk-honk-honk etc", as well as realistic ball-bouncy sounds and an interesting clank when the ball hits the crossbar.

Now I get to the best bit of

HUGHES ONAL SOCCER



all: the gameplay. On the options screen you can choose how advanced you want to play the game, and the later levels, though hard to get into at first, are well worth getting the hang of. At the very basic level, the game plays much along the same way as *International Soccer*. As you progress, the game becomes far more realistic.

You can choose how many directions you are able to kick in at the start. One way means that you shoot in the direction you're facing. Three way means that if you hold down fire and then push left or right, you can shoot 45 to the left or right of the direction you're facing. Five way gives you the choice of 70 and 20 shots in either direction. On top of that there are 28 strengths of shot, and three heights you can shoot at – ground, normal and lob.

As normal, the man currently under control is a different colour to the rest of the team, and the computer automatically chooses the best one for you. This doesn't mean that all the other players are aimlessly milling about, however. All the players are given a little bit of intelligence. If the ball is rolling past them, they'll do a sliding tackle for it. If the ball is going over, they'll jump for it etc. All this leads to a pretty exciting game.

A great deal of character has gone into the production of *EHIS*. For a start at various points of the game, different characters will do different things. The goalkeeper, for example, stands in the goalmouth, head bobbing, watching the ball, jumping and saving at the appropriate moment. Should the ball go over the crossbar, his arms will drop to his side

and he'll turn and stare stupidly at the ball as it sails over his head. If he saves the ball, then he does the usual three step run up and boots the ball into the other half of the pitch. Should you score, your little man runs away from the goal, arms in the air, and then acknowledges the roar of the crowd with a fist in the air.

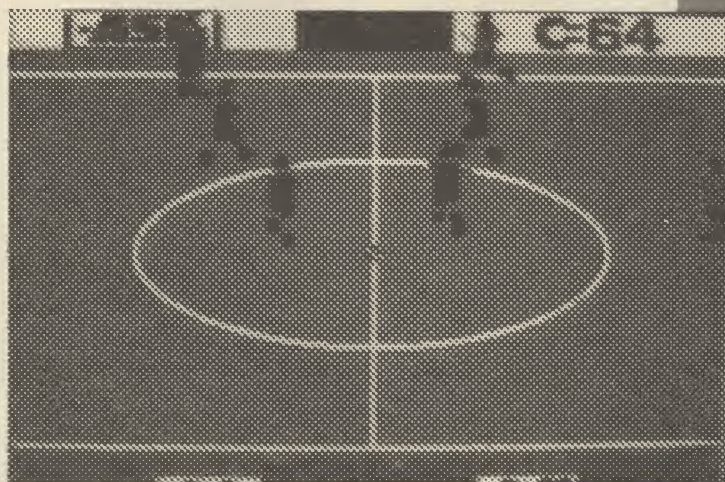
What other innovations has Audiogenic come up with? For a start, the game is two player. That's nothing you might as well whinge, but two player on the same team against the computer? That's a new one on me.

Two player one team is a great laugh, especially if you are playing with an experienced and talented professional like Garry Williams. You can have endless fun passing to each other, messing it up, and calling each other names for the rest of the match. When two players on the same team are on screen, one is decked out in a trendy red jumper, whilst the other either has gone for the skin colour top or simply has just gone topless.

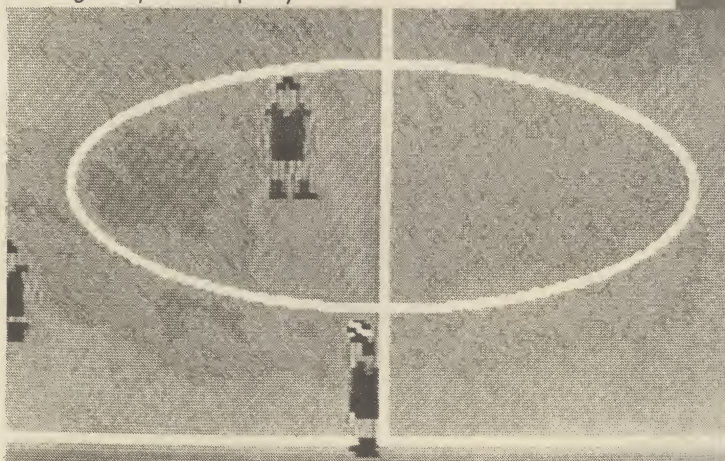
Unfortunately, this game came too late to be included in the league of football games in this month's football feature. Just as point of information, the points I would have awarded it are: Graphics: 10, Sound: 8, Playability: 9, Value: 9, Fun: 9, Total: 46. A clear winner.

Forget the sweaters. Forget the squeaky voice and cuddly personality and think about the game.

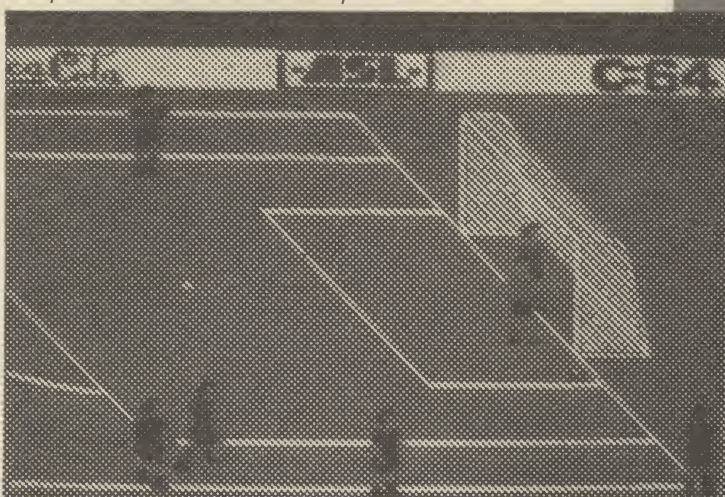
▶ GRAPHICS	10
▶ SOUND	8
▶ VALUE	9
▶ PLAYABILITY	9
▶ OVERALL	94%



▲ The goalie puts it out (Fnar).



▲ Up into the air with a well timed punt.



▲ Looks a bit like an open goal to me.

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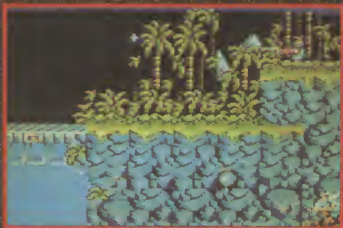
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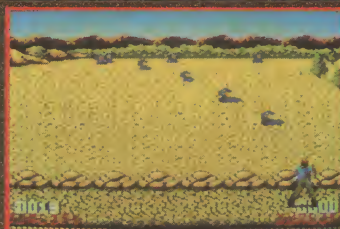
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The beat 'em ups available on 16-bit are a pretty weak and weedy bunch but that's about to change with the release of *IK+*, a fightin' 'n' fumpin' game that knocks everything else for six.

It was written by Archer Maclean, whose previous games, *International Karate* and *Dropzone*, are both considered classics. His latest creation is basically a translation of the 8-bit version, which appeared during the Autumn of last year, and has been enhanced with digitised sound effects, improved graphics, an extra bonus round and film-like opening sequence.

Unlike most karate games, *IK+* has three on-screen fighters, either two computer controlled against a brave solo

player, or two humans against the computer. The objective is obvious – stay alive by beating the others. There are seventeen moves available, ranging from mid-air split kicks to head butts and backward somersaults. Each kick or punch scored on an opponent awards the player with either one or two points, depending on the effectiveness of the move. The first fighter to score six points wins the bout, and the remainder of the thirty second time limit is converted to bonus points. If the player has the second highest points score, he goes through to the next round; if he's last he's out.

Every third screen takes the form of a bonus round. In the first the fighter has a shield and deflects balls as they bounce on from the left and right. The more balls deflected, the faster they come – dodge all 64 and 5,000 survival points are awarded. The second bonus screen requires bombs to be kicked off the screen before they explode – if the fighter gets hit by shrapnel the round ends. If all bombs

are successfully booted, 5,000 points are given. Every subsequent round alternates between balls and bombs.

The player starts a game classed as a white belt, and as he goes through the rounds is promoted to yellow, purple, green, brown and eventually to black – where the opponents are very tough indeed.

A very unusual feature of *IK+* is the mass of cheat modes – there are over fifty of them! Some of the things you can do include changing the judge's shirt colour, altering the size of the shield logo during the bonus round, making the fighter's trousers fall down and changing the background colour. One of my favourites is

▼ Six fighters boogie in the pause mode.



▲ Red and blue psyche each other out after



▲ Brandishing the shield in the bonus round

ATIONAL RATE +



opening sequence and title screen, complete with psychedelic fighters, and the pause mode is great.

Some may say that beat 'em ups are past their prime, but I defy anyone to pick this up and not get totally hooked. It's got all the elements of a classic, and has the timeless gameplay that'll keep you coming back long after 'big' games like *R-type* and *Starglider II* have been relegated to the software shelf.

activated by typing PAC – keep watching the background. There are also a wide variety of messages, and the game can also be put into turbo mode, which is brilliant fun!

The animation is excellent throughout, with the fighters looking superb and moving with a convincing cartoon-like fluidity. The range of expressions and reactions is absolutely superb, further enhanced by the incredible digitised sound effects. The grunts and thumping sounds are great, but the best ones of all are the Bruce Lee screams and wails – in the midst of a fight *IK+* sounds just like the fight scene at the end of *Enter the Dragon*!

▼ Plenty of fightin' an' fumpin' action.

The gameplay matches the high standards set by the visuals and sonics, and provides much entertainment and enjoyment. The difficulty level is set just right, and the fighters are very unpredictable – there doesn't seem to be a 'safe' move that often flaws games of this kind. Although the opponents are slow on early levels, their erratic nature can surprise even the most skilled opponents, making the game that much more exciting to play. On very high levels play gets unbelievably frenetic, and requires reflexes and complete concentration to ensure survival.

The presentation is superb, with a lovely

▶ GRAPHICS	9
▶ SOUND	9
▶ VALUE	7
▶ PLAYABILITY	9
▶ OVERALL	93%

UPDATE...

An Amiga version is following hot on the heels of the ST, and although it won't play differently, the sampled sound effects should be a little crisper.

The C64 version has been available for well over a year now, and can now be found on the *We Are The Champions* compilation from Ocean, which is great value for money.



out after a bout.



us round.



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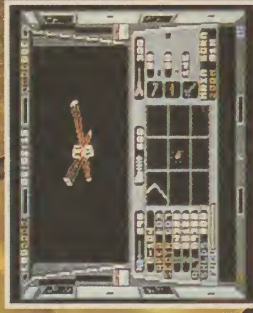
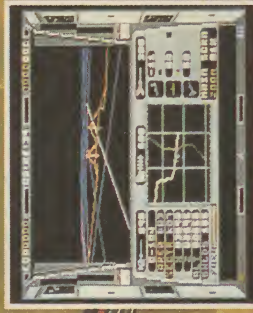
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- **MACHINES:** ST, AMIGA.
- **SUPPLIER:** LORICIELS.
- **PRICE:** £19.99.
- **VERSION TESTED:** ST.
- **REVIEWER:** TONY DILLON.

Turbo Cup is the result of a large sponsorship deal on behalf of Loricels. In case you didn't know in the Andros Turbo Cup race in France one of the biggest celebrities is the one and only Rene Metge who, judging by the documentation I have on him, has done more races and rallies than you've had hot dinners. As I said, this game is based around the Andros Turbo Cup, a gruelling jaunt around some of France's toughest tracks, including the twisty and turny (with a bit of straight) Paul Ricard track.

You can choose which of four tracks you wish to compete. For a beginner, you want to look for a track with lots of straights and some gentle bends, to make the race a little easier. Unfortunately, computer cars also find

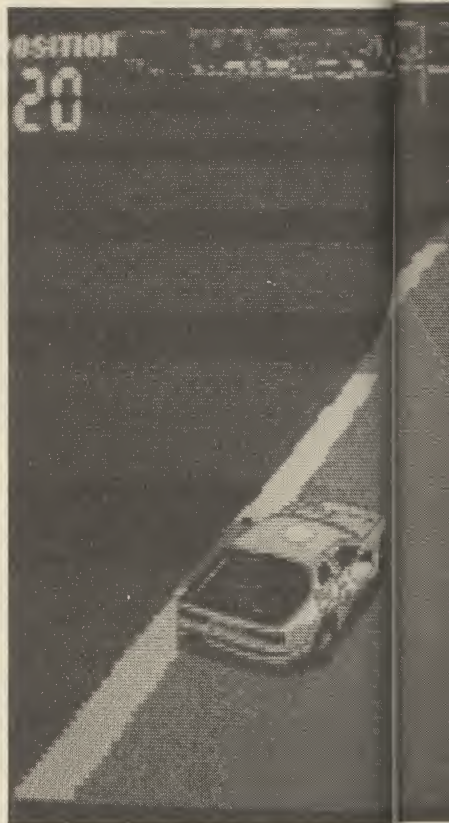
that kind of track easy going, and go just that bit faster. On the more complex tracks, the cars go slower, which makes it a little easier for you to get position, but not to stay on the road.

The ATC is set over a weekend's racing. On the Saturday, each car has to do a solo lap to establish an average lap time and grid position. So, before you can race, you get to do your solo attempt. You start, looking down on your remote control Porsche from behind and above, and this is here you stay, a bit like *Out Run*, but with a much higher viewpoint. It's at this point that you realise just how good the graphics are. The Porsche is amazingly well defined, complete with recognisable interior and Loricels logo on the door. The road is in much the same mould as *Out Run*, with the two-tone grey stripes that scroll toward

the screen giving the impression of movement.

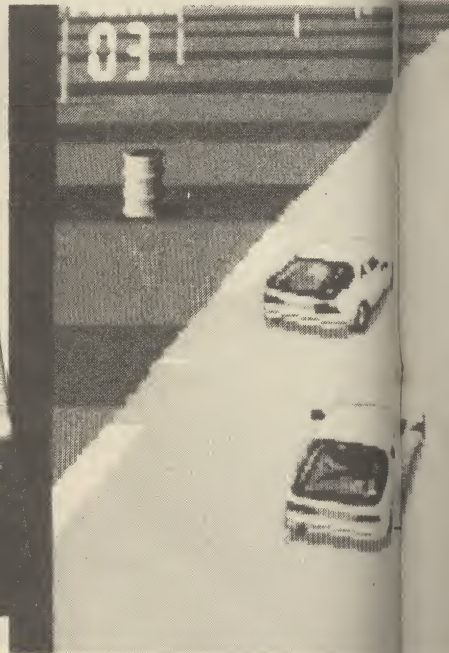
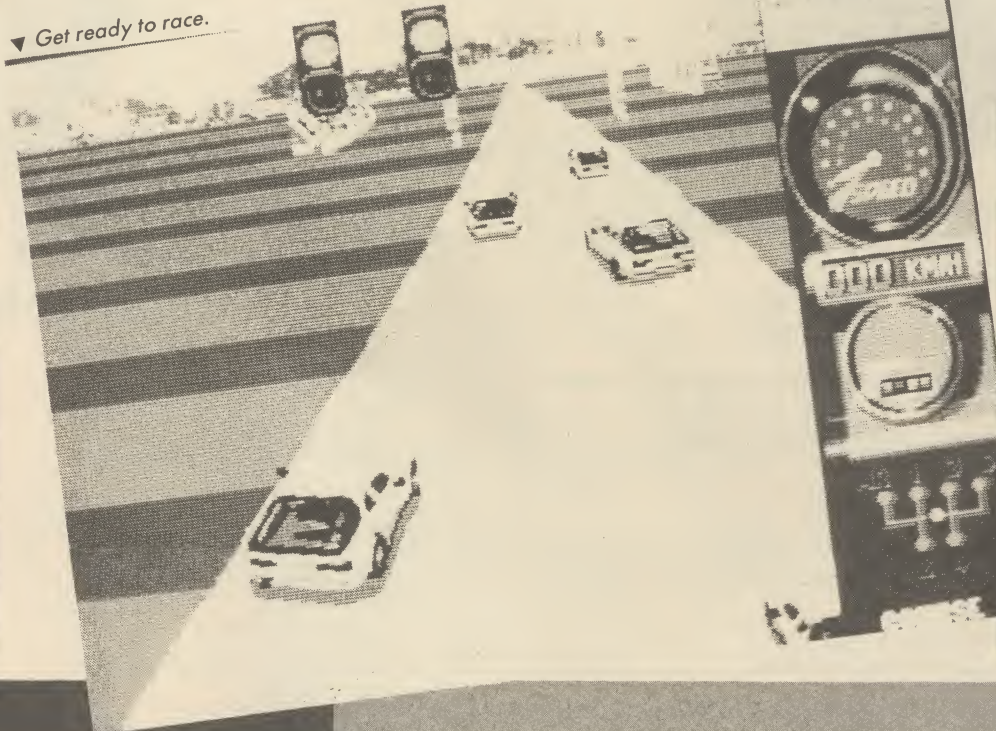
Not that they are necessary. The markings on the road, coupled with the smooth update of the massive edge of the road items (like grandstands, buildings, trees etc) and the ultra-slick hills and dips do all that is needed to make this a convincing game. That plus the smoothly animated computer cars and the widening and narrowing of the track and, oooh, everything.

The sound is good and atmospheric. I didn't know that a Porsche 944 turbo in neutral sounded like a bus. Still, rev up the engine, wait for the light to turn green and push her into first. How do you push her into first? Here's an innovation for you, you get a choice of five different ways to change gear. You can change it the ordinary way



▲ *Turbo cup has top marques.*

▼ *Get ready to race.*



0 CUP



(hold down fire and push up or down to change up or down), you can slam it into automatic or you can use the keys one to five to change to gear one to five. All pretty basic. Then you get two choices never seen before. You can use a second joystick to change up or down, or you can hold down fire to go into clutch, and move the joystick in the same way as a real gear stick to move into position, which, though a little awkward at first, soon feels much more natural.

So, you're off and racing round the bends. What do you notice then? The sticky control. Unfortunately every game has a fault, and with this it's the simple fact that the programmers have been a little bit heavy on the inertia, which make the car very hard to control. Plus the fact that the car is hard to steer

round bends at high speed.

Once you've done your practice, you get yourself positioned amongst the 20 other cards in the race and wait for the race to start. The race itself is the same as the practice, other than that there are more cars and it's a bit longer. What you're looking for is the best race time possible, as well as the best positioning at the end of it all. The computer cars make it a little difficult, however. Each has been given a limited amount of artificial intelligence. Basically, they'll get out of your way so that they don't plough into you, but then they'll cut you up so that you can't pass. Should you hit one, one of a three things happens. You bump into them and slow down a little; you're sent into a recoverable spin out, or you're sent flipping and spinning and land on your roof, all depending on

your speed before the crash. What got on my nerves at this point was the way that the computer car was unharmed, and carried on going.

Loriciels hope to market the software with a limited edition offer. A free die cast metal model of the Loriciels Sponsored Porsche (check out our competition for more details), complete with movable steering wheel and gear stick, opening doors, boot and bonnet and reclining seats. At only another few pounds (price to be announced), it's definitely worth shopping about for it.

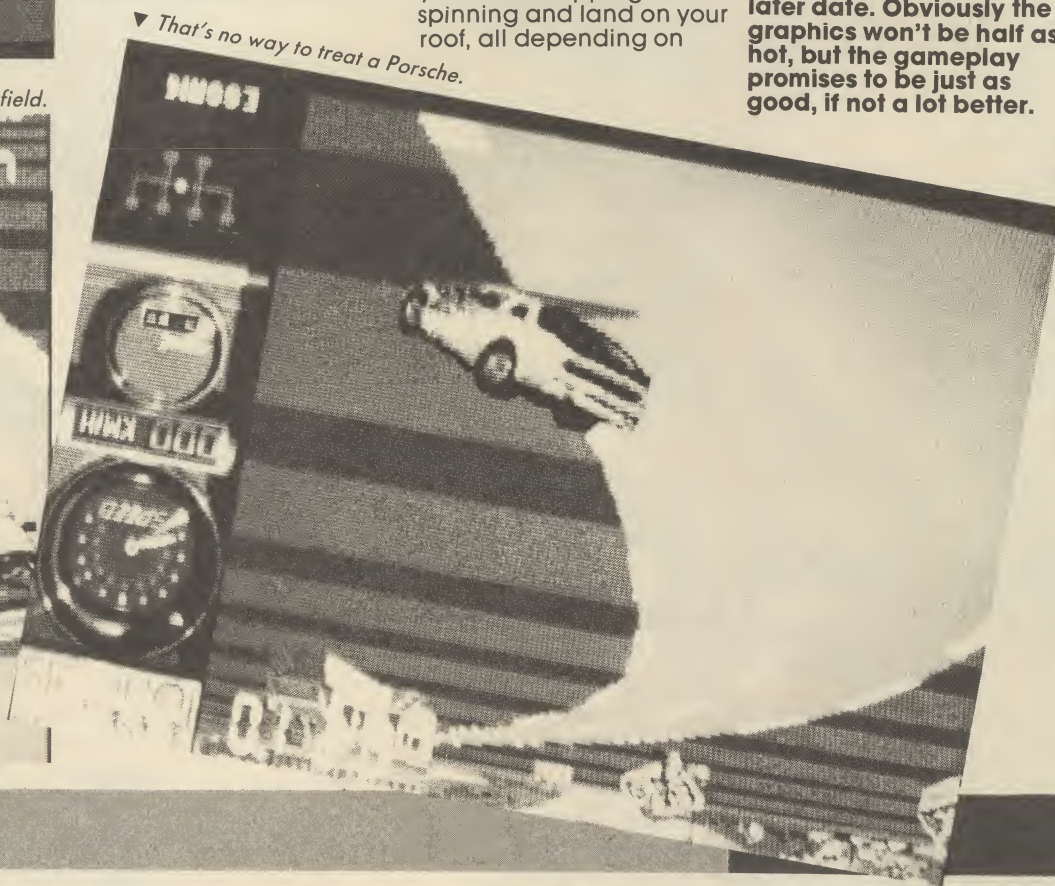
▶ GRAPHICS	9
▶ SOUND	8
▶ VALUE	7
▶ PLAYABILITY	6
▶ OVERALL	81%

UPDATE . . .

The Amiga version is planned for release at the same time and boasts the same high definition graphics and even faster and smoother gameplay.

C64, Amstrad and Spectrum versions are planned for release at a later date. Obviously the graphics won't be half as hot, but the gameplay promises to be just as good, if not a lot better.

▼ An early attempt to take the field.



▼ That's no way to treat a Porsche.

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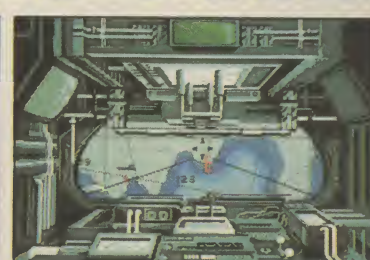
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9.00am SAVAGE

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Savage features graphics so stunning they'll put your Christmas tree lights to shame!

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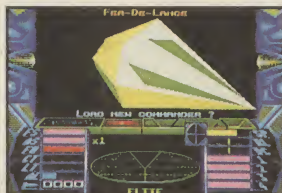
Amstrad screen shot

11.00am ELITE

Intergalactic action hits the 16-bit screen with a bang as the all time classic **ELITE** explodes into solid 3D splendour. Be warned, this game is so addictive you'll be up all night . . . and Santa won't leave any goodies if you don't get to bed on time!

Atari ST £24.95

Amiga £24.95



Atari ST screen shot

3.00pm DYNAMIC DUO

Going underground takes on a new meaning as you battle through pitch black tunnels and passageways in search of wealth beyond your wildest imagination. But beware of lurking monsters with no sense of tradition, it's duck not turkey on their Christmas menu.

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Amstrad screen shot

6.00pm BLAZING BARRELS

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THE MEXICAN BANDITO

TNT Tom

THE REALLY BAD GUY

You, alias Black Jake

THE BOUNTY HUNTER

Atari ST £19.99

Amiga £19.99



Atari ST screen shot

9.00pm EXPLODING FIST +

When the snow starts a-falling and the wind starts a-howling there's nothing better to warm up those frost bitten fingers than the blistering heat of **EXPLODING FIST +**.

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Commodore 64 screen shot



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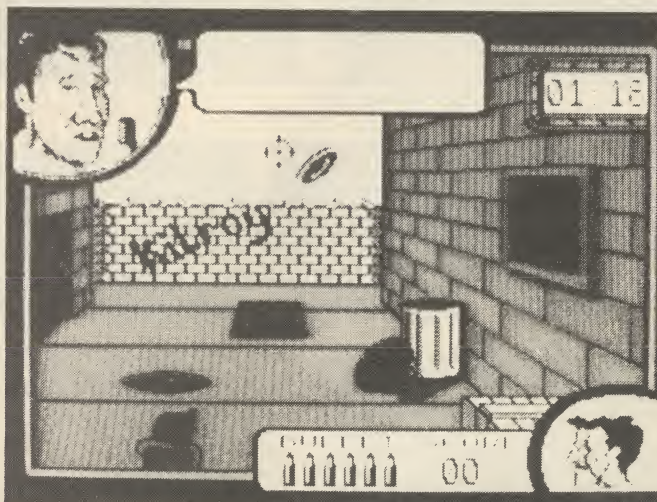


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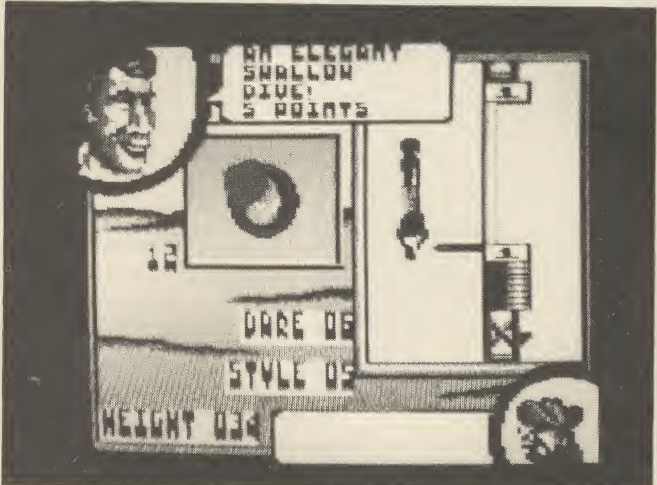
A LEGEND IN GAMES SOFTWARE

SUPERSPORTS

Reviews



▲ Shoot the dustbin lids in alley target practice.



▲ Going down - aiming for paddling pool.

- **MACHINES:** SPEC, AMS, C64.
- **SUPPLIER:** GREMLIN.
- **PRICE:** SPEC CASS, £7.99, DISK £12.99, C64/AMS CASS £9.99, C64/AMS DISK £14.99.
- **VERSION TESTED:** AMSTRAD CPC.
- **REVIEWER:** TONY DILLON.

Supersports bills itself as 'The Alternative Olympics'. Alternative. Yes you could say that. Just get to look at what's on offer.

First up is the Crack Shot event. You have a gunsight, a six-shot rifle, and an ordinary, everyday, city alley. You gain points for blasting away at the bounding tins and pop-up targets that appear from drains, and the round targets that mysteriously float across the alley. Now and again a friendly Alley cat will pop

up somewhere and sit on a wall or bin. Don't shoot at these, or you lose five points.

This event isn't too hard once you get the hang of positioning your gunsight in the path of the target and then blasting away. The only things that make it difficult are that after every six shots you have to reload which is a time waster, and you only get one and a half minutes to score as much as possible. After each event, you are shown a league table, showing who's in the lead, and told if anyone has broken any records.

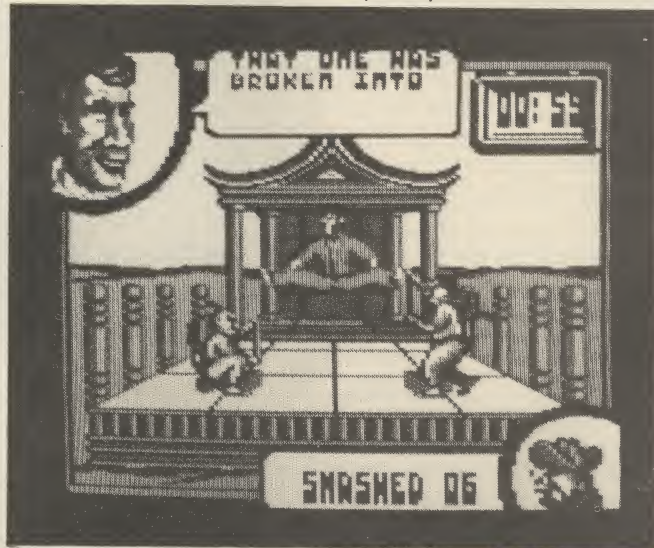
From the elegance of a dirty alley, to the murky depths of an Olympic size bidet. The Dare Devil Dive. The idea behind this little barrel of laughs is that you climb a ladder (anything from 40 feet to 400 feet) and

then attempt to jump from it, perform as many flips and tumbles in the air as possible, and then land in a kiddies' inflatable paddling pool.

The slate smash is a laugh and a half. Two sumo wrestlers stand either side of your karate champ and hold up pieces of slate. You have to punch or kick in the appropriate

now and then and his mouth moving amazingly out of synch. Not as good as *Bobby Yazz*.

Graphics are nice and colourful, as seems to be the norm with Amstrad games these days. The sound is jingly, but becomes grating very quickly.



▲ Oriental beat 'em up event.

direction and try to break as many slates in the 60 seconds.

Cross bow has you at the end of a field, with a target at the other side. Waggle your joystick to build up pressure, then press fire. Aim the bow using the little sight provided, taking care to compensate for the wind and distance and everything.

You don't have a time limit, and you don't have a specified number of lives. Not much of a challenge, really.

Finally, it's the underwater assault course. Swim the length of the black lagoon avoiding clams, jellyfish and mines and collecting coins, occasionally swimming to the surface to get a bit of air. Amazingly tedious, this bit.

All this is overseen by your zany commentator, Gilbert, whose face remains perpetually in the corner of the screen, a little speech bubble appearing

Although there is technically nothing wrong with *Supersports*, I still don't think I can heartily recommend it. I just didn't have much in the way of fun playing it. And when it comes down to it, it's the fun that counts.

► GRAPHICS	8
► SOUND	6
► VALUE	4
► PLAYABILITY	7
► OVERALL	62%

UPDATE ...

The Spectrum and C64 versions are all being released at the same time, so all three should be in the shops as you read this. The Spectrum version has all the same graphics as the Amstrad, although colour isn't used so lavishly.

The 64 version has much the same in the way of graphics and feel as the Amstrad version.

Reviews

- **MACHINES:** C64.
- **SUPPLIER:** MICROPROSE.
- **PRICE:** £14.95 CASS, £19.99 DISC.
- **REVIEWER:** TONY DILLON.

Red Storm Rising is the latest in a long, long line of wonderfully realistic and amazingly involved simulations from Microprose, and pretty darn good it is too.

As you might have already guessed, I think that *Red Storm Rising* is terrific. It's got everything a good simulation needs, good graphics, neat game layout: both in terms of the visual side of things and the accessibility side of things. It's got nerve shredding tension and a depth of play that my weekend's superficial playing barely managed to scratch. And it's by Sid Meier, well known for his contributions on other Microprose products such as *Stealth Fighter*, *Gunship*, *Silent Service* (another sub sim), and, so I've been told, the new superfast F19.

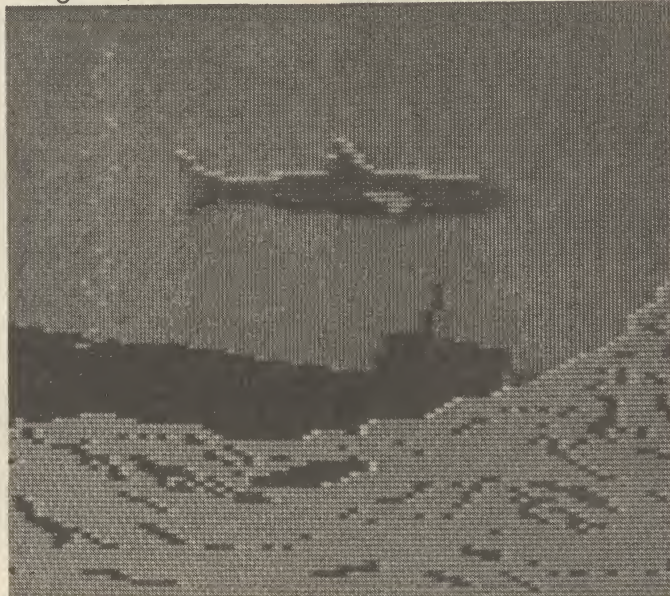
As with all the most recent Microprose 'games', there are two

ways to get maximum enjoyment from the product: you can bung on the key overlay, load the game, put it on easy and learn the game itself, or you can go through the manual and learn the game slowly and carefully. Now I don't know about you, but I'm all one to plunge right in at the deep end, but that's the kind of guy I am. The manual, now that I've got round to it, is great and has 108 pages of very interesting information, full of statistics on enemy vessels, weapons, areas around the globe, full

the depths you can strike at enemy surface ships!

▲ The start of a beautiful intro sequence.

RE STORM



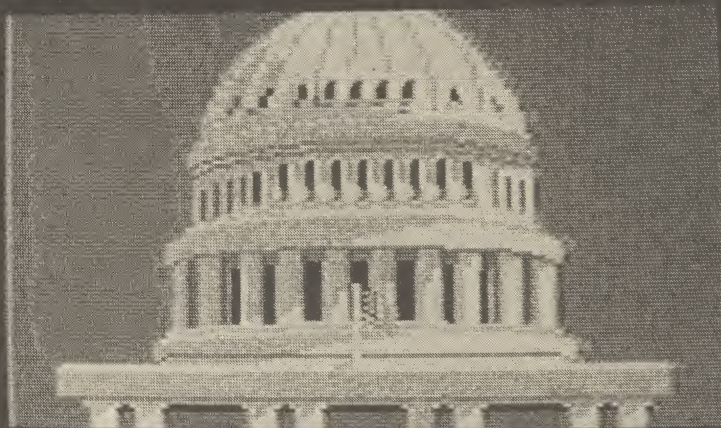
▲ Whoops!

battle analysis, complete step-by-step breakdown: of the RSR controls and the capabilities of your sub, plus a large section completely devoted to battle tactics, which came in handy quite a few times during my underwater escapades.

The first thing you should do when loading up is watch the intro sequence. What you get, after a few advertisements for other Microprose sims, is a complete history of the plot of the game, complete with animated films. I especially liked the bit when the Whitehouse is handed over to the commies, signified by the Stars and Stripes coming down and the Hammer and Sickle being raised to the Russian National Anthem.

As with all the Microprose products, you are fed with an almost overwhelming number of options. You've got four skill levels and five subs to choose from, as well as nine different battle situations, ranging from The Duel, which is an underwater dogfight with a Russian sub, to a Carrier Task Force, which has you on all out assault on an aircraft carrier. Plus two training missions against a knackered boat or an ancient sub that gives out more noise than Gary Whitta.

Select what you're going to do, press all the right buttons, slap on the incredibly useful key overlay (almost every key has a function) and it's away you go. Probably the the two most useful keys when you start out are the



Your failures could mean the destruction of NATO and the defeat of America

▲ Fight for truth, justice and the American way.

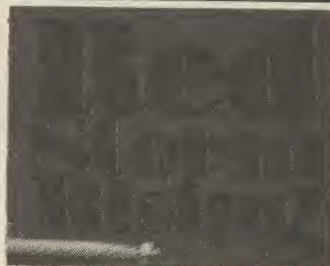
RED

RISING

Pause key, handy for flicking through the manual when you suddenly realise you don't know what you're doing, and a Help key which enables the sub's battle computer to provide you with helpful advice like 'I'd launch a Harpoon or Tomahawk attack on that sonar pickup at 049 degrees, and then get out as quick as possible.'

Once past all the glitz and glamour of the attract sequence, you get into the working environment of the sim proper. Viewed mainly as a set of readings and a map showing all sonar contacts in relation to you, it's clean, it's effective, and it's very easy to use.

So, you're engaging the enemy and you've got a sonar contact. What do you do? Well, first you have to identify what's out there. This can be done two ways. If it's a ship, then you can just surface and check it out with the periscope. If it's out of visual range, or is an enemy sub, you have to go through the many screens concerned with 'sonar recognition'. The basic principle behind this, as far as I can understand, is that everything has a different sonar 'signature'. Your sub's on-board computer has all the details on anything you might be likely to meet, and it's by matching the signature against signatures held on computer that you identify the enemy. Once you know what it is, you then know what it's likely to have weapons wise, and also what its capabilities are, as well as what weapon to use against it.



▲ Attack from below.

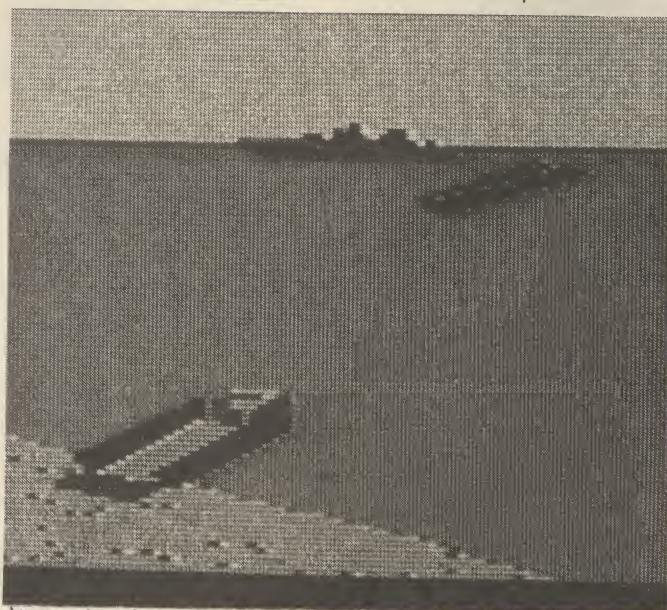
The key to the game, however, isn't just mindless 'There's a boat, boom, oh no there isn't, oh look, there's another one...' and so on. The key is stealth. Go low and slow, sneak up on them, launch a quick but deadly attack, then get out of sight again. That's the secret.

Attacking is slow, however. You have to remember that some of these weapons travel through the water, and as they are guided, they are designed to double back should the enemy take evasive action. The flight of the missiles/torpedoes is

displayed as a trail on the map, so you can look back and see just how hard that particular enemy was to sink. To liven things up, thankfully, you get short animated scenes showing the launching of the weapons, plus when/if they hit, you get to watch the death of your opponent.

Should you ever get bored with the many missions that are provided at the start, and I can't see that happening very quickly, you can always try out the full Red Storm Rising scenario, as based on the book itself.

Red Storm Rising is ace, fab, brill, wicked and totally awesome. Well up to the Microprose standard of quality sims. I can't wait for the next one.

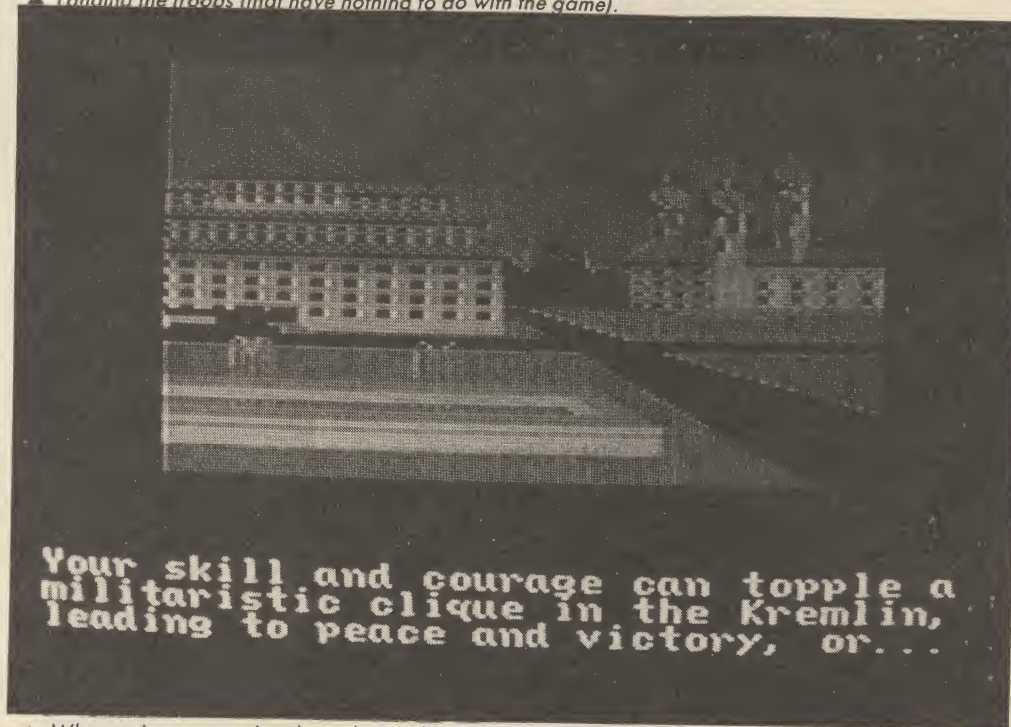


▲ Landing the troops (that have nothing to do with the game).

▶ GRAPHICS	6
▶ SOUND	7
▶ PLAYABILITY	9
▶ VALUE	9
▶ OVERALL	93%

UPDATE ...

At present there are no other versions available, though Spectrum, Amstrad, Amiga, ST and PC version 'may become available over the next 12 months'.



▲ What a picturesque view (complete with tank).

Reviews

- **MACHINES:** SPEC, C64, AMSTRAD.
- **SUPPLIER:** TARGET GAMES.
- **PRICE:** SPEC/C64/AMSTRAD £9.95 CASS.
- **VERSION TESTED:** SPEC.
- **REVIEWER:** TONY DILLON.

Aside from the rather naff packaging, *Laser Squad* is one of the best games I have ever played on any computer. It's one or two-player tactical warfare situation on a small scale with great graphics, sound, playability and hookability to boot. One-player it's great, two-player it's unbeatable.

You are put in command of a group of around half a dozen characters, each with different statistics concerning weaponry and basic strength (both manually and characteristically). The group's role depends on which player you are and which of the three basic scenarios that you can choose to play.

The first is the Assassination.

Player one plays the Laser Squad, a band of Rebels given the job of assassinating Sterner Regix, one of the biggest crime bosses. Player two takes the role of Sterner and his house security droids, each armed with high powered lasers. Player one wins if he manages to kill Sterner within 20 game turns (cycles). Player two wins if he manages to wipe out the Laser Squad.

Second comes Moonbase Assault.

As before, player one takes the part of the Laser Squad, who this time have to attack a moonbase from inside, wiping out all the databanks and computer analysers in the base. Player two has to defend it. Player one wins if he manages to wipe out all the computers. Player two wins if he manages to wipe out the laser squad.

Third is Rescue from the mines.

The Laser Squad has to



▲ Hi Ho, Hi Ho, it's off to maim we go...

LASER SQUAD

go down into an alien mining colony and rescue the three humans imprisoned there. The aliens have to stop them. Player one wins if the humans are rescued. Player two wins if he manages to wipe out five humans, laser squad or not.

Before a scenario, each player has to select armour and weapons for their respective teams. You are presented with cash and have to buy the best armour and most powerful weapon you can, which is a painstaking process. You have a lot of weapons to choose from, which one you choose depends on where you are going to fight. It's no good having a mega destructive rocket launcher if you're going to be fighting in an enclosed area. You have to deploy your characters. For the uninitiated, deployment is a merely positioning your characters in their start positions. The areas you can deploy in are highlighted, and the

computer won't let you deploy anywhere else. Once all this is done, you can get into the game.

A plan of the map can be called up by selecting Scanner on the pop-up menu. On it you can see the positions of all your men, plus the positions of the enemy in any of your men's field of vision, which extends 45° either side of the direction a man is facing.

It's this 'line of sight' rule that governs the combat rules. If you have your back to an opponent, you won't be able to shoot at him, basically because it won't register on your scanner, or even on the main display. You can scroll the main display around, but you won't find any enemy units, which is far more realistic than some previous efforts.

Each man has a number

of Action points, and it's these that govern how much that character can do during a turn (it costs one action point (AP) to turn through 45°, four to walk forward over level ground etc) and once his supply has worn out, he can't do anything else until the next turn. To move him about, rotate him using the left and right keys, and push forward for him to move in the direction he's facing, and pull back to make him walk backward.

Graphics are large, colourful, full of character and instantly recognisable. The attention to detail is amazing.

Sound is fab. It's actually quite amazing the sounds Mr Gollop has managed to get out of the little rubber keyed thing.

Laser Squad is one of the hottest games I've ever played. If that isn't enough, Target is releasing expansion packs for the game, with more scenarios and more ideas. Me, I want to see a construction set.

In the mansion in the first scenario there are a couple of bathrooms, each complete with a loo and a sink, as well as lots of other rooms, all fully furnished and some even have some pretty attractive carpet.

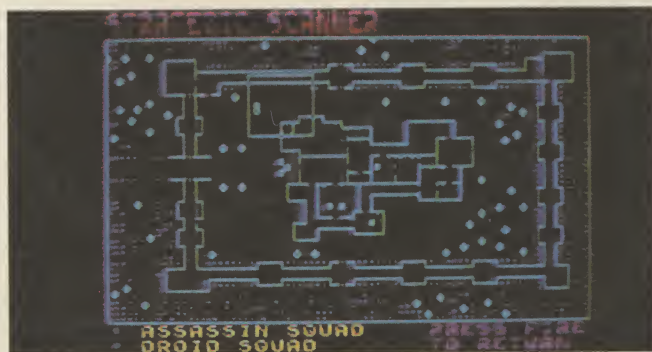
► GRAPHICS	9
► SOUND	9
► VALUE	9
► PLAYABILITY	9
► OVERALL	97%



UPDATE...

A 64 version will be available mid-December and boasts some enhanced graphics and sound. The gameplay remains the same.

Expansion Pack One should be available as you read this. It has two new adventures, the second of which is set in a huge alien landscape and is spread over two levels. Sounds good to me.



▲ Scanning for dem dare bad guys.

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Screen shots from various systems.

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So you think you grew up in a tough neighbourhood, huh? Well make my breakfast, punk! East LA is no easy lay – the homeboys and their floozies, they all carry Uzis. So when it comes to school, ya gotta stay cool . . . (*Enough of this c . . . rap!* – Ed).

What I'm trying to say is that this month we have two movies set in the sort of area where you wear a bullet proof vest to go shopping. The gangs rule the streets, dealing drugs, eliminating their enemies, displaying their *Colors* (18). Not the sort of beat for an average cop . . . but then again, Bob Hodges isn't an ordinary cop.

Hodges may be no angel but he steps in where even the foolish fear to tread. He's the law but he understands the language of the ghetto, which has helped him build a sort of trust with the streetwise kids. Not so Danny McGavin, his new partner. He's only a little older than the gang members themselves, and his idea of diplomacy is a gun in the back or a nightstick to the skull.

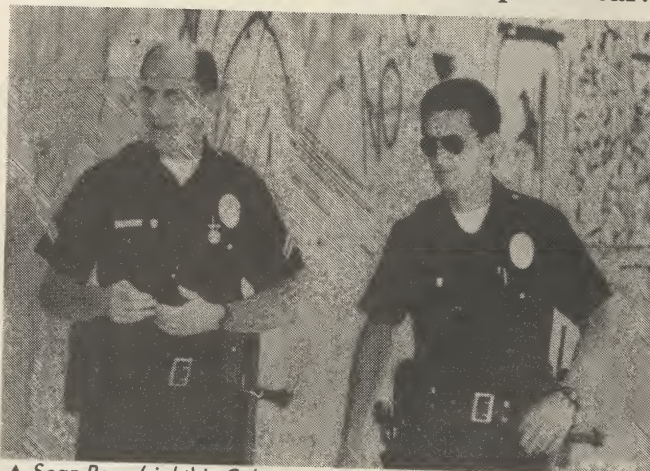
Warfare escalates as machine gun fire sprays from the side of a passing car, shattering the silence of the streets. When the smoke has cleared, the screeching of tyres faded into the distance, yet another corpse leaks blood onto the sidewalk. It's a jungle out there but the police CRASH teams are fighting back, wearing their 'colours' too. Will Hodges softly-softly approach to McGavin's gung-ho aggression win the day?

When *Colors* appeared in the States it caused an uproar because people said it glamorised the gangs. I can't see *Colors* as a recruiting film for street fighting – if the guns don't get you, the drugs will. But I'm writing from the peace and quiet of England. There really are areas of American cities which the police have surrendered to the teenagers, and *Colors* paints a terrifying portrait of total anarchy.

Robert Duvall is excellent as the sane and sober Hodges while Sean Penn convinces as the hot-headed McGavin – but then again, he's had a bit of practice. Dennis Hopper directs for maximum

BIG Screen

Freeze, movie-goer! You have the right to remain silent as Ward R Street prowls the latest film previews in the C + VG patrol car.



▲ Sean Penn (right) in *Colors*.

atmosphere, and though the film may not be quite the deep statement it wishes to be, it is exciting and frightening. Watch this one then get paranoid as you walk home.



Who'd be an East LA Cop? Worse – who'd try to reach maths in an East LA school? For some crazy, crusading reason Jaime Escalante has given up a perfectly good job in computers because he wants to train the urban terrorists of Garfield High in the mysteries of advanced calculus. This stooping figure with his crater complexion is obviously a madman.

You may think I'm pretty wacko too, advising you to

▲ *Weird goings on in The Seventh Sign.*



▲ More naughty children in *Stand And Deliver*.

go see a film about black belt sums but Escalante is probably this month's most charismatic hero – so when he says *Stand and Deliver* (15) you'd better give him the goods. Faced with a group of surly students who can hardly add two to two, Escalante uses every technique from karate chops to playing with toys to persuade his class that they can understand calculus.

Faced with his muscular approach to maths even the toughest of the tough eventually give in, putting in hours of overtime to take a major exam. But their success is so overwhelming that the education authorities won't believe they didn't cheat. So, having successfully battled against a society which told them they would never achieve anything, Escalante's class now has to fight to hold on to its victory.

All this would be a nice, heart-warming little tale but for one thing – it's all true. There is a teacher called Jaime Escalante and he really has worked mathematical miracles. Like *Colors* the atmosphere of the streets and classrooms is unbelievably vivid, with great performances from all the students. But best of all is Edward James Olmos – Castillo in Miami Vice – joking, threatening, persuading them that they can do the impossible.

It's good to see a film which says that everybody can achieve things if they only have the confidence and work hard. Compare *Stand and Deliver* with *Nico* (18), a formulaic thriller postponed from last month, in which the 'hero' overcomes his underprivileged background by becoming a violently unorthodox cop. If it comes to a toss up between street warfare or classroom calm, I'm on the side of Escalante and Hodges rather than Nico and McGavin.

Another delayed release is *The Seventh Sign* (15), a not too horrific horror flick in the Omen mould. That great warehouse in the sky has run out of souls so the apocalypse is now. Despite some effects work, most of the gore is kept hidden. Not so with *The Hidden* (18). Here the horror drips, squelches and bleeds in explicit colour.

BIG Screen

If East LA cops have problems, the ones faced by Tom Beck are literally out of this world. Investigating the case of a staid businessman who suddenly goes mad and embarks on a killing spree, Beck is given a new assistant, a young FBI man named Gallagher.

Is there something strange about the self-assured rookie? Beck doesn't have time to wonder because now another man has gone loco, springing up from his intensive care hospital bed to live for kicks! Something very strange is happening – something which looks like a huge slug and which oozes out of one man's mouth just before he dives into the body of another. See, I said it was yucky!

The idea of an alien parasite using its human hosts as disposable shells while it lives for fast cars and rock'n'roll is a great one and the first half of the film is enormous fun. But creativity tails off in the last half hour and the movie coasts in to its climax rather than racing at full speed.

Some times it seems like America – or more specifically East LA – is the only place where anything happens. Then all of a sudden you're supping Guinness in a small Irish seaside town and everything erupts around you. It's times like this you call for *Taffin* (18), at all, at all.

Taffin is the local strong arm man. He collects debts, leans on people, that sort of thing – and you know he's not just a common thug because he's played by brooding hunk and one-time Bond contender Pierce Brosnan. But when big business moves into town, with plans to develop the picturesque cliffs into an industry development, even Taffin has his hands full.

With its pretty scenery and a liberal touch of the blarney, bejabers, Taffin is fairly entertaining. But somehow it isn't tight enough to keep you on the edge of your seat and its underlying debate about the use and abuse of violence is forced.

If you want a film which really flies try *Bird* (15) – the story of the great jazz saxophonist, Charlie Parker. Okay – so this won't please you Status Quo fans but if you're into more mellow

pseudo-theological mess.

Told with all the freestyle of a jazz improvisation, daddio, Bird drifts from poverty to fame, battles with drug addiction and depression, attempts suicide and spends time in mental institutions, told via a series of flashbacks and memories. How good is this film? Well, I went in never having heard 'Bird' play and came out looking for a late night record store to buy an album. Get hip because the 'Bird' really is the word.

I better mention while we're on matters musical another film, which appeared at the end of October. *Imagine: John Lennon* which is a documentary compiled from over 200 hours of film from the late-Beatles' private collection. For anybody interested in the band, or even what happens when a perfectly ordinary Liverpool lad wins fame and fortune beyond most people's imagination.

Talking of superstars, *Switching Channels* (PG) has three of them but still comes out as a weak comedy about satellite TV news. Quite how Christopher Reeve, Burt Reynolds and one of the most intelligent actresses in Hollywood, Kathleen Turner, got mixed up in this mish mash is difficult to understand.

Turner is the ace reporter about to quit to marry spoilt young playboy Reeve while her boss and ex-husband, Reynolds, tries to hold onto her to cover one last story. Fans of old movies will recognise this story from several other incarnations, but *Switching Channels* doesn't fail because the plot is creaky – it just fails to do it with the style of previous versions. Despite the title, you cannot switch channels in the cinema. Pity!

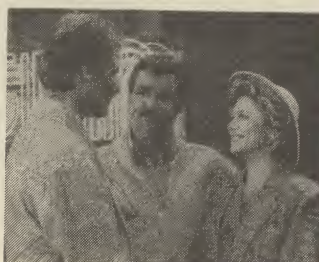
Slightly more interesting is *Kansas* (15), the story of a college kid, played by Andrew McCarthy, who meets up with drifter Matt Dillon and ends up on the run for robbing a bank. How McCarthy falls in love and tries to avoid the psychotic Dillon is entertaining enough but the film fails to capture the bleakness of middle America in the way that *Badlands* or last year's *Promised Land* did. Despite good performances, in the end *Kansas* is full of corn.



▲ Pierce Brosnan in *Taffin*.



◀ Hands up or we shoot.



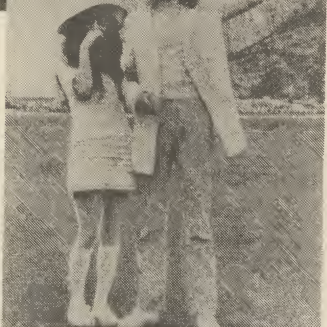
▲ Thumbs down for *Switching Channels*.



▲ Watch the Bird – says Ward R. Street.



▲ Kansas is full of corn.



▲ John and Yoko – in *Imagine*.

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P.S Anyone entering the Spitting Image competition (see FAX this issue) and wants to draw a cartoon of one of the fine and upstanding body of boys and girls pictured above may find it useful to know which is which. Left to right at back: Lora, Andrea, (Little) Matt, Seamus. Front: Garry, Jaz, Euge. Remember, some of these are caricatures already!





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FUNNY OLD INIT C

Footballs have been kicked around computer screens for just about as long as the gaming habit has existed. 1988 saw more releases than ever before – Tony Dillon asks what is and what is not good computer football.

Of all the simulations, authentic endorsements and plain old original attempts, there can't be any topic that comes as close to a games player's heart that our very own Soccer. Even in the very early days of paddles and mono displays, where the Grandstand home entertainment console reigned supreme with it's

best, the worst, the one with the nicest graphics, the one that you couldn't tell the difference between the ball and the players, or indeed the players from the pitch, or simply the one that we liked the most. Also, we've put our heads together and come up with a league table of all the football games around at the moment,



► Computer football – second only in popularity to computer Ninjas.



► European Five-A-Side – budget footy smash.

incredible 4-game selection football was one of them. Admittedly it was nothing more than computer tennis with double the number of bats, but it was still football. And it was the first.

Since then, many have tried to recreate the feelings of running about on an open pitch, being buffeted by the wind, the cheers of the crowd and smells of the other players. What we at C+VG have tried to do is come up with a comprehensive guide to the more memorable ones, the

including the ones we didn't get to mention. So, here goes, straight into section one, which funnily enough is about.

Arcade Football

Of the three genre of football games (Arcade, Managerial and Diagnostic), the arcade is easily, judging by the sales, the most widely popular, though games like Football Manager still rank

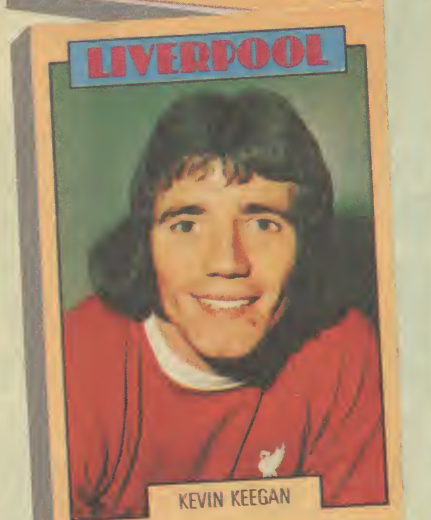
high up in the list of best selling games. There were many early attempts at football games way back in the dawn of programming history, when programming people were just finding their feet. Now defunct Artic, for example, released World Cup I and II, which both featured small matchstick men, slow gameplay and a very low computer skill level. Funnily enough, World Cup II was given a facelift (well, not really a facelift, more a snip-and-tuck around the chin) and was released by US Gold under the title World Cup Carnival to coincide with the World Cup happening at the time. It came packaged with lots of photographs, posters and other World Cup memorabilia. Nevertheless it flopped and went down in game history as one of the worst games ever, ranking up there with The Great Space Race itself. Probably the most



PETER SHILTON



MALCOLM MACDONALD



KEVIN KEEGAN



STAN BOWLES

OLD GAME, CECIL?



successful of the early arcade football games was International Soccer on the Commodore 64. Originally only available on cartridge (now released on tape and disc by CRL), it featured large blocky graphics, crude animation and a tendency to crash quite a lot (well, mine did!). The funny thing is, even with today's high programming standards and the high level that consumers expect to find of today's software, it's still one of the best you can get on the 64. Except, of course, for a slightly altered version I saw a while ago, changed by the hands of our dear friend, Mr Gary 'Moose' Penn, who changed the players from their running state, and placed them all in wheelchairs, which is sick, and terrible (snigger), and not (cough, splurt) at all (ready to burst) funny (Ha ha ha).

So, what else happened that shook the world of football gaming? Matchday did! Written by Jon Ritman, and Bernie Drummond, it was quite simply incredibly superior to anything that had appeared before it, on

the Spectrum anyway. It featured large, well animated graphics, a goalkeeper that could dive and a chance to play through a knockout championship to win the FA Cup, as well as simultaneous two players to boot. Not long after that came Matchday II, which had all the above and then some, such as jumping headers, a league facility with a code entry system, and improved graphics, not to mention DDS. What's DDS? The Diamond Deflection System. What this does is work out what direction the ball's going to travel in when it hits off another player, with the player's speed and direction brought into account.



► *Sega Soccer – C+VG's all time fave footy game.*

Between these two came the game that should have been a lot better and, judging by its features, it was. Unfortunately, it wasn't. Super Soccer included things like sliding tackles, energy levels and extra training, but was so bugridden and unplayable that it flopped. One major bug was the energy thing. If you played a long game, the players would run out of energy quite quickly. What they would finally end up doing was jog around the pitch at a snail's pace, then if

you tried to do a sliding tackle, they wouldn't get up again, so basically 80 minutes into the game, the pitch would be littered with dead players.

Both the Nintendo and Sega have their own soccer games. Nintendo's is called Soccer, and is quite playable and has several levels of play. It also has a two-player option, but suffers from slightly sluggish joycard response. That withstanding, it's still a lot better than you can buy on most home computers.

Sega's World Soccer is one of C+VG's all-time favourite games, and can be held responsible for many hours of lost work time – particularly the case with



ALAN BALL



STEVE PERRYMAN



MICK MILLS



JOHN TOSHACK

Gary Williams, the Ads Manager. Unlike him, though, the game is absolutely brilliant and fully captures the spirit of a big game, with the players able to do overhead kicks, banana shots and slide tackles. It's a shame that it's only available on the Sega, as it's the best soccer game on any home system.

Up until recently, games have been displayed in semi forced perspective 3D, which works really well but often makes aiming for the goal difficult. Now a new

FUNNY OLD GAME, INNIT CECIL?

trend is emerging: the overhead viewpoint.

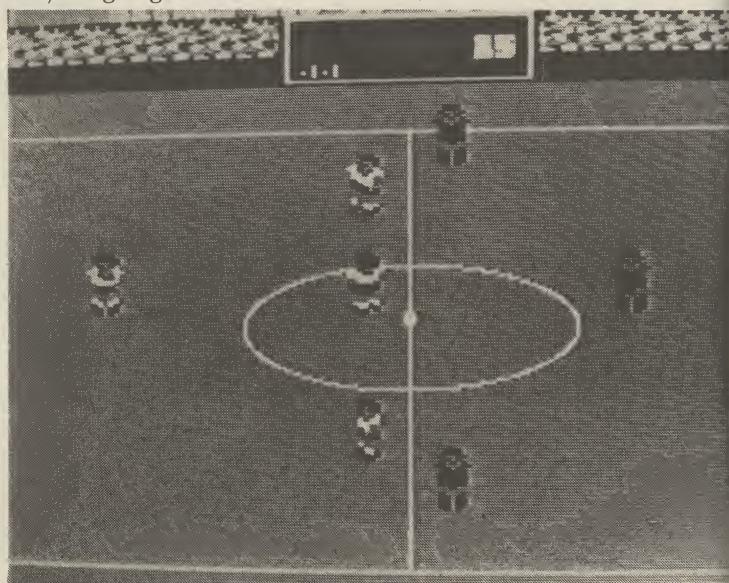
Games like European 5-a-Side and Supercup Football let you view the action from above, which gives a much more accurate look at the action, with the size of the ball increasing and decreasing to denote boots skyward. Easily the best, however, is the new one from Microprose/Sensible Software. It's smooth, fast, very playable and extremely polished and scored 95% in the last issue. It's menu system is incredible, and the game comes a very, very close second to World Soccer – it's easily the greatest football game available for home computers.

But these are mere highlights of all the arcade football games around at the moment. Check out the league table for the full C+VG report. Now, let's move onto the next section, which by some staggering coincidence happens to be about.

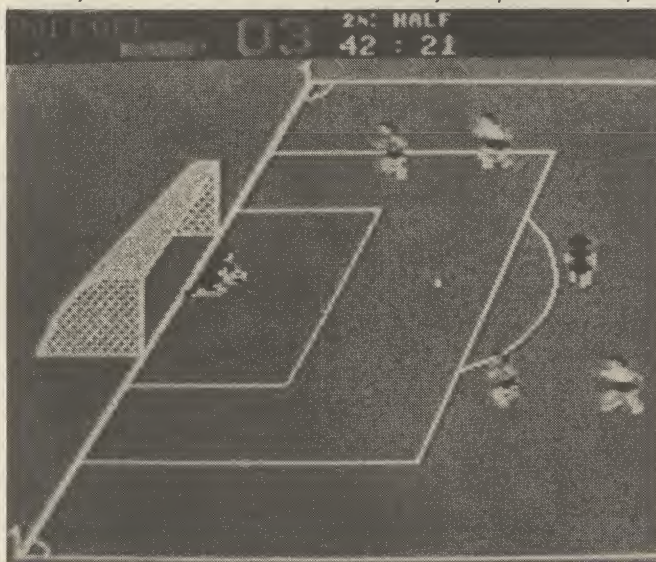
the manager/secretary/-accountant of your chosen team and have to make all the right decisions with the ultimate aim of taking your team to the top of their league and winning the FA Cup/World Cup/Nations Cup/whatever. Of all the ones I've seen, rather than mention games that stand out, I'm going to talk about



▲ Microprose Soccer – is the one to watch



▼ Gary Linekar failed to score. ▲ Matchday – superb on the Specy.



Managerial Football

Moving completely away from games that require fast reactions and an eye of an eagle, and onto the slower, more thoughtful games that are around the managerial. Typically: in a managerial game you take the role of

the companies involved. First is Kevin Toms' company, Addictive. They released the first successful managerial game way back in, oh, well it was a while ago. It was then hailed as the best football game ever (not much of claim; check out the opposition at the time!) and was pretty simplistic. Written in 100% basic, it

consisted of a series of screens with a choice on some of them. After cycling through them, you get a few highlights of the match you just played, with matchstick men and beepy sound effects. Though not much by today's standards, it still has to get a mention for being the original. I wish I could say the same for it's successor, FM2. The only difference between them were screen redesign and better graphics on the game highlights. A shame really, considering what could have been done.

One company that I have to mention are D+H games, a company almost solely devoted to managerial games, especially football ones. Though none of their games require huge amounts of thought, feature no graphics, have a tendency to be slow and are generally small, there is still an edge of the seat feeling when playing a match as minute by minute it updates the score. Probably their most famous one is Football Director.

